BC 108



















PRACTICAL LOGIC:

OR

HINTS

TO

YOUNG THEME-WRITERS,

FOR THE

PURPOSE OF LEADING THEM TO THINK AND REASON WITH ACCURACY.

760

- The House

1873

By B. H. SMART,

AUTHOR OF THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF ELOCUTION, GRAMMAR OF PRONUNCIATION, GUIDE TO PARSING,

&c. &c.

"To teach the young idea how to shoot."-THOMSON.

LONDON:

G. AND W. B. WHITTAKER,

AVE-MARIA-LANE.

1823.

BC!S&

- Villi

The second

The second secon

100

PREFACE.

THE little work here presented to the public, is an attempt to fill up a remarkable gap in the course of elementary treatises intended for youth. Among the interminable number of school books, there is no one of a practical kind, expressly calculated for advancing pupils in the most important of all attainments,—the art of just and accurate reasoning. The ordinary systems of logic do not answer the end, and are accordingly always left for the study of riper years. What is wanting, and what this manual attempts to supply, is a plan which may lead young persons to think and reason for themselves, may point out the common errors to which they are liable, unfold as far as necessary, that is, as far as their practical improvement requires, the nature of an argument, and explain the terms of art which they will have to use or understand. The plan laid down is the result of actual experience in teaching. The author, though

chiefly occupied as a lecturer on Elocution, is frequently required, particularly in ladies' schools, in some of the first of which, in and near London, he is the English master, to add to the Reading lesson some instruction in Composition; and being conscious that accuracy of thought and reasoning ought to form the primary object of the exercises in this department, he has always been accustomed to call the attention of his pupils more closely, at first, to this point than to the niceties of style, lest the more important object should be overlooked and forgotten. But while the study table was loaded with books for their guidance in all that relates to grammar and diction, not one was at hand to clear the way immediately before them; and their progress was therefore less certain and satisfactory than it would otherwise have seemed, because the faults were undefined, by avoiding which their improvement was estimated.

Such was the exigency that produced the following pages. The detail of the plan will be best understood by running the eye over the table of contents. If some parts of the second and third chapters, which attempt to develop the nature of an argument on philosophical, though it is hoped, plain principles, should be deemed too much for the comprehension of beginners in theme-writing, let it be remembered that these parts are not meant to be forced on the pupil's attention, till he feels a want of the information contained in them. On first using the book, the teacher and pupil had better seek for assistance in Chapter the fourth, where the method of writing Themes is explained, and plans for several Themes are laid down. The pupil should then proceed at once to try his own powers on easy subjects, and read Chapter the first to assist his practice, the teacher taking care, in correcting his exercises, to point out how far he has fallen into, or avoided the faults which are there described and exemplified. At length, through these means, he will obtain some insight into the nature of an argument, and he will then be competent to pursue the inquiries in the subsequent chapters, the teacher, at the same time, being careful to try the reality of his progress by the questions in the Appendix.

Though the book is intended chiefly for youth at school, the author presumes to think it may not be useless to many who have finished their early studies. They will smile, no doubt, at the *rawness*

manifest in most of the examples, but the faults described are not less important to be guarded against, because the author has judged it best to illustrate them by instances taken from the themes of the younger among his pupils. Had he wished to give consequence to his little volume, he could easily have brought all his examples from works that have appeared in print. He is glad to avoid so invidious a course, particularly as perhaps some of his own pages might lay him open to recrimination.

50, Leicester Square, Feb. 20, 1823.

CONTENTS AND ANALYSIS.

CHAPTER I.

THE COMMON FAULTS WHICH LEARNERS COMMIT

WRITING THEMES DESCRIBED AND EXEMPLIFIED, VIZ.	
PA	GE
First General Fault, Verbiage	2
Second General Fault, Confusion among the Thoughts	3
Third General Fault, Want of Connexion among the Thoughts	8

Faults of Verbiage.

Fourth Fault, Begging the Question	12
Fifth Fault, Explaining a thing by itself	13
Sixth Fault, Distinction without a Difference	14

Faults from Confusion among the Thoughts.

Seventh Fault, Confounding different Senses of the same Ex	
pression	. 15
Eighth Fault, Overloading a Sentence	16

Faults from want of Connexion among the Thoughts.

Ninth	Fault,	Proposing too n	nuch	19
Centh	Fault.	Forgetting the l	Proposition	20

	PAGE
Eleventh 1	Fault, Discoursing short of the Proposition 21
Twelfth F	ault, Discoursing wide of the Proposition 24
	Fault, Proving too little
	r Fault, Proving too much
1 our teent	Tauti, 110 ving too muon
	CHAPTER II.
On Conone	dizing 29
On Genera	uizing
	CHAPTER III.
	and the second second second second second
ARGUI	MENTS AND THEIR SEVERAL KINDS EXPLAINED.
The Natur	e of an Argument 38—52
	3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3
Names	of Arguments derived from the Topics whence
110000	
	they are taken, viz.
	Definition 52
	Etymology 53
	Enumeration
110	Species 55
Harrison of	Genus 56
	Adjuncts 57
	Antecedents 58
Internal.	Consequents idem
1110011111	Cause, { efficient final } or à priori
	Effect, or à posterioriidem
	Similitude idem
	(à fortiori /
	Comparison, analogical proportionate
	Contraries

CONTENTS. xi
PAGE
Testimonies
External. Singular Examplesidem
Names of Arguments derived from the Data on which
they rest, viz.
Argumentum ad judicium 63
Argumentum ad hominemidem
Argumentum ad verecundiam, &c64
222 gamentam au vercountam, ees
Names of Arguments derived from the Forms in which
they are expressed, viz.
Syllogism 65
Enthymemeidem
Epichiremaidem
Dilemma 66
Sorites, &cidem
The Difference between Hypothetical and Categorical, direct
and indirect Argument 67
Reductio ad absurdumidem
CHAPTER IV.
ON THE METHOD OF WRITING THEMES, WITH EXAMPLES,
AND PLANS FOR SEVERAL THEMES.
TALLE TOU SET DIVINE THE SECOND
On the Method of writing Themes
Plans for Themes
Subjects for Themes
Plans for Theses 92—98

A	P	P	E	N	n	T	X.
7.7	-			-	v		23.

211 1 11 11 12 12 1	
PA	GE
1. Questions for examining the Pupil, adapted to the foregoing	
Chapters	99
2. A few general Rules for Punctuation 1	07

10 00 000 000

PRACTICAL LOGIC;

OR,

HINTS

TO

YOUNG THEME-WRITERS.

CHAPTER I.

THE COMMON FAULTS WHICH LEARNERS COMMIT IN WRITING THEMES, DESCRIBED AND EXEMPLIFIED.

THE word *Theme* properly means the subject of a discourse; but the discourse itself, if merely an exercise in Composition, is also called a *Theme*.

A Theme may otherwise be described, as indeed it ought to be considered, an exercise in the art of thinking. In the earlier stages of education, the sole employment of learners is to collect, from others, materials for thinking: in writing themes, they are required to bring these materials into use by thinking for themselves. As to language, it should be considered only as the means

or instrument of thinking *, and of making the thoughts known outwardly. Unless viewed in this light, and employed solely for these purposes, the pupil sets out on a wrong principle, and no real improvement will be made. Hence the first fault to be laid down as necessary to be avoided, is the undermentioned:

FIRST FAULT TO BE AVOIDED.

Joining words and phrases together which seem, from their plausible sound and connexion, to convey a meaning, when, in reality, we have no clear thoughts on the subject to express. This forms what the French call, Verbiage.

A pupil who has read a great deal, but has not thought a great deal, will have his head very full of book phraseology, and very empty of ideas, and will be apt to put this cheat upon himself, and possibly upon some others, by a kind of jargon, of which the following may serve as a specimen.

ON EDUCATION.

The invaluable blessings of a refined Education, are so multifarious in their extent, and so incalculable in their number, that the understanding and the imagination are equally unable to comprehend the phenomena

^{*} To assert that language is the instrument of thinking must not startle the young reader: without representative signs of some kind, we could never abstract or generalize. This doctrine will become clearer, as he advances.

involved in the boundless subject. Who indeed can justly appreciate the ineffable advantages which accrue to gifted individuals, ardent to develop the germs of scientific lore? Still less can we discern the endless ramifications springing from that centre, of which Education is the heart and soul. Educational discipline exalts the faculties, animates the mind, improves the understanding, and, by throwing a divine light on the abstract operations of human intellect, gives a new grace to the whole character. Through the instrumentality of the influence which Education alone can impart, we are lifted to another sphere. In short, Education is the first of things, the master key, the universal good, and we are bound at once to reverence its authority, and apply to its pure fountain for mental delight, and intellectual improvement.

SECOND FAULT TO BE AVOIDED.

Confusion among the thoughts; arising from the absence of all distinction and division.

However confused, incorrectly expressed, and inelegant, a pupil's Exercise may be, yet if it exhibit the least evidence of some definite notions on the subject suggested, the work of correction may commence, and gradual improvement may thenceforward be expected:—it will be the teacher's business to show, in every exercise, how the thoughts may be better arranged, and more correctly expressed; and the pupil, by constant attention to these corrections, will grow into method and perspicuity. But with an Exercise like the example

just given, nothing can be done: it is not a beginner's Exercise in the art of thinking, but in a very different art; and the teacher, to do his pupil justice, must run the correcting pen through the whole, and require him to make altogether a new beginning.

Possibly the learner, before every Exercise, will require to be assisted to a few thoughts; nor must it be imagined, even if he is indebted to his teacher for every sentiment he expresses, that they are the less his own: for are not all his sentiments acquired?-how, and at what time, is of little moment, if it be certain that his mind completely entertains and acknowledges them. But between two pupils thus assisted by their teacher, one of whom makes his Theme an Exercise of thought, and the other, an Exercise of words, there will be this difference,-the former will forget many of the expressions, but will carry away the meaning, which he will embody in more homely, and less correct language of his own; the latter will carry away all the best sounding words and phrases, with which he will make an incoherent jumble, wearing much of the outward form of what the teacher suggested, without any of the spirit. An Exercise of this kind affords no promise; -it is altogether an erroneous attempt; and the teacher can do nothing but send his pupil back, perhaps with new assistance, to make another trial: but an Exercise of the other kind, however meagre

and deficient, may be accepted for a beginning: improvement will come with practice. The following is an example of a very humble attempt, but still of one that affords some promise.

ON EDUCATION.

Education is certainly one of the most important things which belong to man, and the most useful and essential of any, if we reflect what a wild savage race we should be, if it were not for this inestimable blessing, and how very fortunate they ought to think themselves who have parents both able and willing to be at the expense of it, without which we should not know the Author of our existence to whom we are indebted for all our blessings and comforts, and we should not be able to provide for ourselves, for it is not the same with us as it is with birds, which instinct teaches to provide for themselves when they leave the nest of their parents, instead of which we are not only made agreeable in society, but if we make a proper use of it, it is the source of all happiness, and therefore since we are sensible of its worth, let us who possess it think ourselves unspeakably happy, and never think it too much trouble to obtain, for surely it is the least we can do for such a valuable benefit.

This production is an attempt to form a connected discourse out of a number of remarks, which, for the purpose, are indiscriminately huddled together by an undue use of conjunctions, relatives, and other uniting particles. And this may serve as a specimen of what will gene-

rally be the first essay of every young student. As yet, it is evident he knows nothing of the art of Composition; for Composition means arrangement, and of this his remarks are altogether destitute. It is in seeing his Theme corrected that he gets the first insight into his business; and therefore the nature of the corrections must be carefully studied. Let him observe, then, that all the remarks he has made do not come under the same description; for some might come under this head—On the importance of Education; and some under this—On our duty as young students; and thus the Theme separates into two smaller Themes, to be signified by a division or break forming what are called Paragraphs *. And again, let him consider, that if the remarks in each of these paragraphs explain, illustrate, and enforce each other, there is no necessity for any closer connection; and instead of huddling them together, he ought to keep them separate and distinct, in order that every remark may be clearly apprehended in its turn. For this purpose, let him use the period or full stop as often as any assertion, or any single argument, or any remark of whatever kind, seems of consequence enough to stand by itself; and where the connexion seems too close for a period, let him use a colon or semi-

^{*} Chapter III. on the Method of writing Themes, must be referred to for further information on this point.

colon, and the comma only where the construction of the sentence evidently forbids any higher stop *. Thus by division and subdivision, with a few minor corrections, this first Exercise will be moulded into the following shape.

ON EDUCATION.

Education is the most important and essential concern of man. For let us reflect what a wild, savage creature he would be, without this inestimable blessing. He would not know the Author of his existence, to whom he is indebted for all his comforts. He would not be able to provide for himself. For it is not the same with man as it is with birds: they know, almost entirely by instinct, how to provide for themselves; but all knowledge necessary to man, comes by Education. It is Education which lifts him from his helpless state, makes him an agreeable member of society, and prepares him for all happiness.

Since, then, education is so important, let us to whom it is offered think ourselves unspeakably happy, and never imagine we can employ too much pains to secure all its advantages. Let us reflect how very fortunate we are in having parents both able and willing to be at the expense of books and instructors; and let us show our gratitude by our willingness to learn, which is surely the least return we can make for benefits so valuable.

^{*} For further directions respecting punctuation, consult the general rules in the Appendix.

THIRD FAULT TO BE AVOIDED.

Want of Connexion among the Thoughts.

From one extreme, it is not unlikely that the learner may run into another. Warned by the confusion which appeared in his first attempt, and aiming at the greater distinctness of the corrected copy, he will perhaps, at the next attempt, produce an Exercise formed of sentences after the following manner:

ON FRIENDSHIP.

Friendship is a subject which has often employed the pen of the moralist. We all feel that Friendship is necessary to our happiness. Many persons pretend to be influenced by Friendship, who are incapable of so noble a sentiment. Without a friend, the world &c. &c.

Sentences of this kind do not form a theme, because, though they all relate to the same subject, they are not parts of the same train of thoughts: they are entirely independent of each other, and ought indeed not to be written down in immediate succession, but with breaks in the manner of paragraphs, thus:

Friendship is a subject which has often employed the pen of the moralist.

We all feel that Friendship is necessary to our happiness.

Many persons pretend to be influenced by Friendship, who are incapable of so noble a sentiment.

This is the way to write maxims or proverbs, but a theme must be managed very differently. We must not start from one remark to another which has no immediate relation to it, but consider how the proposition we set out with, can be enforced or supported by remarks tending to the same purpose, till nothing more seems needful to be said upon that branch of the subject*. And where a remark appears to be destitute of a sufficient purpose, we must either reject it altogether, or turn it to a purpose by the remarks that follow it:-the first of the foregoing remarks is an instance,—"Friendship is a subject that has often employed the pen of the moralist." It seems hardly worth while to make this remark for the sake of itself, and therefore we expect some following remarks to define its purpose: for example:

Friendship is a subject which has so often employed the pen of the moralist, that the few thoughts it may suggest to my mind, cannot be either novel or striking. Yet my remarks, though trite, may deserve some attention, because the subject itself is of the highest importance.

Thus amplified, the sentence forms a proper introductory paragraph. The next sentence may now be taken, and followed up thus:

We all feel that Friendship is necessary to our happi-

^{*} The invention of arguments is treated of in the latter part of Chapter III.

ness. Framed for society, we stand in continual need of assistance, support, advice, and sympathy. But the coldness of the world, and even the indifference of our own hearts to all except a few by whom we are surrounded, soon teach us, that, without sincere friends, we may look for these good offices in vain. Therefore we always flatter ourselves we possess friends, though there are many who pass through life unendeared to a single heart, and who are never served or assisted but through motives of interest or of fear.

This paragraph being completed, we may take the next sentence as the ground of another:

Many persons pretend to be influenced by Friendship, who are incapable of so noble a sentiment. The selfish cannot feel it:—they will connect themselves with others to reap some immediate advantage, but they are ever strangers to that regard which frames to itself a happiness out of the happiness of others: all their views are of profit or of pleasure solely to themselves. Yet none are more ready than the selfish to give the colouring of friendship to all their actions; because they know this to be the most likely means of securing the return of greater benefits than they yield.

It is to be observed, that not only the sentences belonging to the same paragraph should seem to grow out of each other, but the paragraphs themselves should have some kind of relation, more than that of merely treating of the same subject. Therefore, though the foregoing paragraph may not be liable to any objection in itself, yet when placed beside the other, it appears to be defective by not being consequent upon what preceded it. This fault may be corrected by drawing such a consequence from the second paragraph as may serve for the ground of the third: for example:

As Friendship is so important towards the happiness of life, we cannot be too careful in our choice of friends, lest we place a reliance on those who will desert and betray us in the hour of difficulty and distress. For alas! many persons pretend to be influenced &c.

A short sentence may likewise be added to the paragraph, to wind it up in correspondence with its beginning; as,

Against such pretended friendship, let confiding generosity be ever on its guard.

Thus it appears, that a Theme ought to be free from verbiage—that the parts ought to be properly arranged—and that the thoughts should flow from, and support each other. Almost every fault which the learner will commit, he will find to be a deviation from one or the other of these three rules; and therefore the faults which are hereafter noted, are not to be considered distinct from those already pointed out, but rather as instances of particular modes in which the general rules are violated.

FOURTH FAULT TO BE AVOIDED.

Begging the Question.

In endeavouring to follow up a proposition by remarks that agree with, and support it, the learner must well consider the nature of each remark, and use no other connecting words than such as are suitable to its purport; otherwise the sentences so connected will be *verbiage*: for instance:

Pride is odious, because it is disliked by all: for it produces universal hatred.

Here the words following because and for, pretend to be a reason for, and a proof of, what is previously asserted, and they only say the same thing over again in a different manner. Standing thus, they are verbiage; for they are meant as reasons, and perhaps sound as such, without being so in reality. And as the writer begs that to be allowed for a proof of the question, which is in fact the question itself, he is said to beg the question. There would not be the same cause of objection, if no pretence were made of giving a reason: as,

Pride is odious;—it is disliked by all;—it produces universal hatred.

To repeat the same proposition in different words may occasionally be proper for the sake of greater clearness, or of adding circumstances at first omitted; and sometimes a proposition requires only this forcible statement, in order to be acknowledged. But when a reason or a proof is proposed to be given, the writer must be at the pains of seeking one: as

Pride is odious, because our self-love makes us feel it as an injury done to our own importance.

Or

Pride is odious; for all persons shun the society of the proud.

FIFTH FAULT TO BE AVOIDED.

Explaining a thing by itself: that is, using, in the explanation of a thing, the same word, or a word having the same meaning, as that which stands for the thing to be explained.

This is a fault of the same nature as the last; but as it is, in general, more easily corrected, and frequently arises merely from inadvertence, a separate notice of it may be proper. The following will be a sufficient example.

Justice regards both magistrates and private individuals. The former show themselves to be influenced by it, when they make an *equitable* distribution of rewards and punishments; the latter, when they are sincere in their words, and *just* in their dealings.

The words equitable and just cannot serve to explain justice; for having the same meaning, they do but repeat the thing which is to be explained. Let impartial be substituted for the former word,

and *honest* for the latter, and the explanation will agree with the writer's intention.

SIXTH FAULT TO BE AVOIDED.

Distinction without a difference.

Against this common species of *verbiage*, one or two examples will be a sufficient warning.

Example 1.

I propose to consider, first, the evils which arise from Procrastination, and then, the miseries we should avoid by performing all our duties at their proper time and place.

The writer, if he really means different things, must mean "first, the evils of Procrastination, and then the benefits of performing" &c.

Example 2.

Books are the receptacles of knowledge, and the depositories in which the collected wisdom of ages is treasured up.

Example 3.

Docility is a readiness to receive instruction, and a willing obedience to those who teach.

In each of these examples, the latter part of the sentence does but explain the former, as a noun in apposition explains its fellow noun; and therefore the conjunction *and*, which signifies addition, should be omitted: as

Confounding different Senses of the same Expression. 15

Books are the receptacles of knowledge—the depositories &c.

Docility is a readiness to receive instruction—a willing obedience &c.

And as adding what is no addition always amounts to a distinction without a difference, so likewise does disjoining what is not distinct; as

Example 4.

To be neither merciful nor compassionate is unsuitable to the nature of man.

Here the writer ought to say "Not to be compassionate is" &c.

The fault opposite to that last noted is, a difference without a distinction. This is not a fault of verbiage, but is the second general fault, described and exemplified at pages 3, 4, 5, &c. Of this the seventh and eighth faults which follow, are particular instances; in the same manner as the fourth, fifth, and sixth faults just noted, were particular instances of the first general fault.

SEVENTH FAULT TO BE AVOIDED.

Confounding different senses of the same expression.

An instance of this error occurs in the following remarks:

To write well is an accomplishment of the first importance, because we form an immediate judgment of a

person's education from the manner in which he writes. If we receive from any one a letter scarcely legible, scrawled rather than written, we hardly think well of the writer's education, though perhaps the sentiments may be tolerably expressed. But if the language is ungrammatical, and all the sentences confused; in short, if there appears a total deficiency of skill in the art of writing, we immediately conclude that the person is altogether ignorant and illiterate.

Here bad writing in the sense of bad penmanship, and in the very different sense of bad composition, are confounded together. The whole may be corrected thus:

To write a fair hand is an accomplishment of much importance, because we often form an immediate judgment of a person's other acquirements from the hand he writes. But it is of much more importance to obtain a correct and graceful style of expression. The one is a manual, the other, a mental art. If we receive from any one a letter scarcely legible, scrawled rather than written, we hardly think well of the writer's education, though perhaps the sentiments may be tolerably expressed. But if the language is ungrammatical, and the sentences confused; in short, if there appears a total deficiency of skill in the art of composition, we &c.

EIGHTH FAULT TO BE AVOIDED.

Overloading a Sentence: that is, mingling foreign matter with what is the proper business of it.

Three instances shall be given of this fault:

Example 1.

Courage leads us to face danger without fear; Fortitude, to bear calamity without complaining, and is a virtue all ought to possess: for being, as we all are, born to trouble, afflictions of some kind must fall to our lot.

The proper business of the former part of this sentence, was to define fortitude as opposed to courage, and that business being completed, the sentence should have ended, namely at the word complaining. What follows should be not only in a different sentence, but should begin a new paragraph with the word Fortitude repeated as the nominative to the verb is. For it appears that the writer having made his way clear by defining his subject, is about to consider its necessity, &c.

Example 2.

The high-born, the rich, and the beautiful, are peculiarly exposed to Flattery; and the sweet incense is offered to them in abundance, by those whom all good men justly abhor for their deceitful servility.

This sentence resembles a person who, by trying to do two things at a time, fails in both. The writer purposes to show the dangers arising from flattery which attend birth, wealth, and beauty; and also to show the baseness of flatterers. These two purposes should have been kept distinct; they should not have been attempted even in the same paragraph, much less in the same sentence. To correct the example, we must suppose the two parts of the sentence to stand in different divisions of the theme:

The high-born, the rich, and the beautiful, are peculiarly exposed to Flattery. Their favours are eagerly sought by multitudes, and every stratagem is employed to obtain them. The sweet incense is therefore offered in abundance, and is eagerly inhaled, till &c.

But the Flatterer is justly abhorred by all good men; for the art he uses is deceit and servility. To gain his own ends, he scruples not &c.

Example 3.

We may therefore come to these conclusions,—that perfect bliss is not to be found in this life,—that our felicity consists in the pursuit, much more than in the attainment, of our wishes,—and that happiness without alloy is reserved for another state of being; as the most fortunate of men, when they have reached all they once desired, are still in want of something to complete their happiness.

If the writer had previously stated the arguments necessary to infer the conclusions, the after thought in italics is quite out of place: it is either superfluous, or it ought to have been brought forward among the other arguments.

We come next to notice some particular instances of the third general fault, namely, Want

of Connexion among the Thoughts. This always arises when what follows a proposition does not strictly agree with, and tend to support it, and therefore all imperfect arguments belong to this division. But first it will be proper to caution the learner how he frames his propositions: hence the following may be laid down as the

NINTH FAULT TO BE AVOIDED.

Proposing too much.

A proposition ought not to contain more than the arguments are intended to prove. Suppose, for instance, that a writer intends, in one division of his Theme, to dwell upon the sublimity of Astronomy, he ought not to begin by saying that "Astronomy is a noble, an interesting, and a useful science," but only say that "it is sublime, noble, and interesting."

A writer should be careful of even seeming to promise too much, lest his remarks fall short of the expectation that precedes them. Therefore, in a theme, all high-sounding transitions or introductions should be avoided. Suppose, for instance, that a writer, after a few remarks on the sublimity of Astronomy, were to proceed thus:

Having thus described and illustrated, to the best of my abilities, the sublime thoughts, reflections, and emotions, to which the noble science of Astronomy gives birth, I shall next proceed to show, that this study is not less useful to man, than it is sublime and interesting.

All this is ponderous and disproportionate. It might suit the end of one book or chapter, or the beginning of another, in a voluminous Treatise on Astronomy, but cannot be proper in a short essay. The writer needs only have said, "But the study of Astronomy is as useful as it is sublime:" and should then have proceeded at once to show its uses.

TENTH FAULT TO BE AVOIDED.

Forgetting the Proposition.

Of this error, the following instance may suffice:

Anger has been called a short madness; and people of the weakest understandings are the most subject to it. It is remarkable that when a disputant is in the wrong, he tries to make up in violence what he wants in argument. This arises from his pride. He will not own his error, and because he is determined not to be convicted of it, he falls into a passion.

Here, instead of going on to show why Anger has been called a short madness, the writer wanders into reflections which have no necessary connexion with the particular proposition. He should have reasoned thus:

Anger has been called a short madness. To be con-

vinced that the appellation is just, let us look to the effects of anger. It disturbs a man's judgment, so that he inflicts an injury on his dearest friend, whom, the next moment, he loads with caresses. It makes him run headlong into dangers, which, if his mind were clear, he would be the first to see and avoid. It is true that anger does not always disturb the mind to this degree, but that it always disturbs the mind in a degree proportioned to its violence, is certain; and therefore it may be justly characterized as a madness.

ELEVENTH FAULT TO BE AVOIDED.

Discoursing short of the proposition.

This fault arises from regarding a subject in some partial point of view which happens to be familiar to the writer, instead of regarding it in the extent implied by the term or terms proposing it. Suppose, for instance, that *Education* were proposed;—a writer would ill suit his remarks to the proposition who should proceed in this manner.

Example 1.

My opinion of Education is this, that Reading, Writing, and Arithmetic, are the groundwork, and that English Grammar comes next in importance. A child ought to begin French very early, because the pronunciation of that language is difficult in maturer years. I would also recommend attention to the accomplishments of dancing, drawing, and music; and above all, I would not have needle-work neglected.

The proposition was *Education* in the universal sense of the term, and the arguments should therefore have been of universal application.

My opinion of Education is this, that it is then only just when it fits the individual for his duties. For this purpose, both the mind and the body stand in need of discipline. The mind must be made acquainted with the duties of life, and instructed in all science necessary to their performance; and the body must be formed to whatever habits will most effectually conduce to the same end.

All this is applicable, whether we speak of a male or a female, a prince or a peasant, a member of civilized society, or a savage who lives by hunting and fishing; and the arguments, as to their extent, therefore agree with the proposition.

It is true, a writer is not bound to keep, throughout the theme, to one view of the subject; but whenever his view changes, or whenever he descends into detail, he is bound to state his purpose, and the new proposition, so far as it varies from the first, is a change of subject. Nay, at the very beginning, a writer may sometimes modify the general proposition. Thus, in the Theme at page 7, the writer does not take up the subject quite in the universal sense in which it is proposed; but the sentences at the beginning are a sufficient indication of the view he proposes for

himself. Indeed, this business of generalizing * is a task of so much difficulty to those whose conclusions have scarcely ever reached beyond particulars, that an expedient for avoiding it must sometimes be permitted, if at all reconcileable with the rules of argument. The nature of such an expedient may be shown, by a mode of correcting the following example, which has the same fault as Example 1.

Example 2.

It is from industry that all the blessings of life arise. Abilities however humble, if brought forward by study and diligently exercised, will at length place the possessor in the ranks of honour among the cleverest of his companions; in the same manner as a barren soil, by the incessant labour of the husbandman, is made as productive as that which is naturally fertile.

Here the learner does not contemplate the effects of industry at large, but only so far as his own observation is in the habit of extending. It is most likely that a view of the blessings of industry, resembling that which begins at line 43 of Thomson's Autumn, is beyond his power, because beyond his experience; or, if within his knowledge, he knows not where to find those general expressions which shall express them at once, without descending to endless detail. In place,

^{*} See Chapter II. on this subject.

therefore, of arguments reaching to the whole extent of the proposition, he has merely brought forward a particular instance. But a particular instance may be used as a proof of a general proposition, on the presumption, that, if the proposition is true in this one respect, it is true in all others; and thus any more extensive arguments may be avoided. The example will therefore stand sufficiently corrected as follows:

It is from Industry that all the blessings of life arise. On every side, we see this truth confirmed by number-less examples. For instance, with regard to young learners, we cannot but be sensible that abilities, however humble, &c.

TWELFTH FAULT TO BE AVOIDED.

Discoursing wide of the proposition.

This fault arises from an indistinct view of the subject. Hence the writer, instead of using arguments which agree with the proposition, and with nothing else, employs such as agree with some general proposition under which the particular one is included:—he resembles a person who shoots toward the mark, but does not take aim precisely at it.

Example 1.

Prudence is a sure road to reputation. They who are obedient to their parents and teachers when young, obtain accomplishments which are of the highest value in maturity. As they advance in years, they fear God, honour the king, and do to others as they would be done by. By this course of conduct, it is probable they often miss immediate advantages, such as short-sighted cunning people would snatch at; but they gain what is much better, the approbation of their own hearts, and finally, the respect and applause of mankind.

These arguments do not belong to *Prudence* in particular, but to *Virtue* in general, and would accordingly be suitable to this proposition: "Virtue is the surest road to reputation. They who are obedient &c." Arguments suitable to the other proposition, will be such as these:

Prudence is a sure road to reputation. A man whose abilities are of a common, or even of an inferior order, but who determines cautiously, and chooses the proper time and place for all he says and does, will advance with certainty, though perhaps slowly. The chief cause of his progress will be, the confidence he secures; for all feel the value of his advice, assistance, and agency, who knows exactly when to speak, and when to be silent, when to act, and when to cease from action.

In the following example the writer sees his subject, but not so clearly as altogether to avoid the same fault.

Example 2.

Disappointments are a great part of our portion in this life. In our infancy we are liable to dreadful accidents, and must trust entirely to others for safety and preservation. As we grow older, we think we can take care of ourselves, and we become confident and presuming. But almost every day brings with it some greater or less misfortune, and thus we are gradually taught not to depend entirely upon ourselves, but to put our chief trust in God.

To keep to the point, the writer should have proceeded thus:

Disappointments are a great part of our portion in this life. The wishes and hopes even of our childhood, are as frequently checked as gratified; but this may seem inevitable because we have not yet acquired sufficient experience to form proper expectations. As we grow older, we think our better judgment enables us to calculate less erroneously, and we become confident &c.

An indistinct view of the subject is often betrayed even by a single expression. Suppose a writer were treating of *Melancholy*;—in urging the duty of not giving way to it, he should not say, "We are bound to bear the afflictions of life with *patience*," but "with *cheerful resignation*." On the other hand, if he were treating of *Fret-fulness*, then he ought to argue that we are bound to bear the afflictions of life with *patience*.

THIRTEENTH FAULT TO BE AVOIDED.

Proving too little.

One example of this fault may suffice.

No man can live a happy life who pursues nothing but pleasure. For he will frequently be disappointed of his object, though sometimes, perhaps, he may enjoy a few hours of mirth and gaiety. And though he professedly applies more closely than others to the chase of pleasure, yet he cannot escape those woes of life which are the natural inheritance of all mankind.

These arguments, namely that a man of pleasure is often disappointed, and that he is subject, like others, to the natural woes of life, are not enough to prove that he may not be a happy man; for the best of men are liable to be disappointed in many of their views, and are likewise subject to the natural woes of life, and yet such men are not prevented from enjoying as much happiness as this world can yield. The arguments which follow are such as should have been employed.

No man can lead a happy life who pursues nothing but pleasure. For he will be continually disappointed of his object. Not indeed that hours of noisy mirth or wanton gaiety may not often fall to his share; but these will confer no real enjoyment, because they will want the inward approval of the heart and the conscience. And even on the hollow gladness of these hours, languor and satiety will make daily inroads, till at last, nothing will be left but disgust and pain.

FOURTEENTH FAULT TO BE AVOIDED.

Proving too much.

One example of this fault may likewise be sufficient.

No man can live a happy life who pursues nothing but pleasure. For it is in the nature of things, that when a man gives up his mind to one pursuit, it becomes tiresome. Therefore, people who are always following after pleasure, do not take delight in it, but, on the contrary, pass a troubled, uneasy, dissatisfied life.

Here the argument goes beyond the mark. It is not true that any pursuit which engrosses the mind becomes tiresome; for then the continued pursuit of virtue, of wisdom, of knowledge, and of all other excellent things, would become tiresome: but the assertion is true with regard to pleasure, and therefore the argument should have been stated in the following manner:

No man can live a happy life who pursues nothing but pleasure. For such is the nature of pleasure, that when pursued to the exclusion of serious occupations, it no longer produces the effect desired from it; it then changes its very essence, and becomes disgust and pain.

CHAPTER II.

ON GENERALIZING.

ONE chief thing which young theme-writers have to acquire, is, the ability to reason on general notions and from general principles. This is an exercise of the mind to which they have been little accustomed. During our very early years, we never reason—we cannot reason, but on particular or individual things, because these, and these only, come under the actual cognizance of our senses:-to form general notions from what we observe in these particular instances, is the work of the ripening understanding, and therefore the work of time; it forms indeed the main object of our education. But at length, having gathered a number of these general notions, and formed a number of general conclusions, and having learned how to express them, we are then in a condition to reason from them. It is true that, long before this, young persons make use of general terms in their discourse, but it is for the most part with a particular application. Thus, when they talk of an animal, it is of some particular animal; of beauty, it is of beauty in some particular instance; of an action, it is of some particular action; of benevolence, it is of some particular act of benevolence. It by no means follows, because they make use of the general terms, that they argue from general notions of an animal, of beauty, of an action, and of benevolence: on the contrary, it is by the constant application of the terms with reference to particular instances, that they arrive, at length, at the general notions, for which, as well as for every particular instance, the words have been determined to stand.

Now when young persons are put to the writing of themes, it is presumed they are sufficiently conversant with particular truths to feel the force of a great number of general propositions, and also to form them of themselves. This was meant at page 1, where it is said that the employment of young persons in the early stages of their education, is to collect materials for thinking, and that in writing themes, they are to bring these materials into use. It was also said that language is the instrument of thinking:-it is so in all reasoning on general notions and from general principles; for it is by means of language we designate those general notions that include so many individual things, and form those general propositions that include so many individual truths.

- Two things, then, appear to be necessary toward

the art of generalizing; -first, an extensive acquaintance with individual truths in order to form general notions and conclusions; and secondly, a skilful use of language in order to express them. As to the first of these requisites, it must be left to that gradual improvement which is the result of observation continually extending; toward which improvement, it is presumed the exercise itself of writing themes will be a material excitement. As to the second requisite, that may likewise be expected as a consequence of the learner's progress in the usual branches of school discipline. For a great share of the instruction he receives, is directed to language; and therefore it seems almost inevitable, that while he is extending his knowledge of things, he should not be learning a more extensive application of words, till those which at first he never used but with a view to individual instances, he comes at last to understand, and to make use of, in their widest sense. Nevertheless, as dexterity in the use of general terms, is acquired, like other things, by practice, and as, in beginning to write themes, he is quite behind-hand in this respect, we shall often find him at a loss for suitable expressions, though perhaps the general conclusion he wishes to draw, or the class of things he seeks to designate, may, in his own mind, be sufficiently clear.

Suppose, for instance, a young person has discovered that the rays of the sun concentrated by

the magnifying glass which he holds in his hand, will set fire to the piece of paper which he also holds in his hand. This is a particular truth. But he afterwards ascertains, or probably infers at once from this particular experiment, that it will set fire to straw, wood, and many other things. This is a general conclusion. How shall he express it at once, without running into endless detail, or using an awkward et cetera, which, however proper in catalogues, ought never to find place in a theme? A little assistance from his teacher will perhaps be necessary before he states his proposition thus:

The rays of the sun, concentrated by a magnifying glass, will set fire to inflammable substances.

Suppose again, that, to caution a fellow student against the fault exemplified at pages 15, 16, he had said to him, before he began his exercise, Do not confound the two senses of the verb, to write. This is a rule for that word in particular:—how shall it be made general?—Do not confound two senses of a word? This will not do, because some words may have more than two senses. Here, again, the assistance of the teacher might be needful, before it occurs to the pupil to write thus:

Do not confound different senses of the same word.

Suppose, once more, that having occasion to speak of beauty, the theme-writer had said that

it soon fades. He might afterwards form a more general conclusion of the same kind, by including in his notion, power, wealth, and grandeur; but then the word *fades* will not be equally applicable to each of those words, and some more comprehensive term must be sought, again very likely with the aid of the teacher, before the proposition is stated after this manner:

Power, wealth, grandeur, and beauty, are perishable possessions.

Though practice is necessary to give the learner an apt and ready application of general terms, yet his improvement in this respect will be materially forwarded, by remarking to him, as often as occasions occur, the various degrees of comprehensiveness in different words, and also, how far some of them are more or less comprehensive in strictly philosophical, than in popular use. To begin, for instance, with the word being: in philosophical use, this is the most comprehensive of all names; it includes every other possible name except its opposite, non-entity or not being. However, in popular language, (and this the themewriter must follow,) when a term of equal comprehensiveness is required, we generally employ some such words or phrases as occur in the following sentences:

Whatever we think of, can be expressed by words.

In reasoning on different things, we should always have improvement in view.

The subjects of discourse are infinite.

Philosophers apply the word, being, to every possible object.

Next in comprehensiveness are the philosophical names, substance and mode. But in common speech, instead of saying bodily and spiritual substances, into which the notion of substance ts philosophically divisible, we should probably say, bodily and spiritual creatures or beings; for substance, in common language, gives a notion of materiality. Material beings are animate or inanimate; a naturalist would say, are animals, vegetables, or minerals. Animals comprehend the several genera (the plural number of the word genus or kind) man, beast, bird, fish, insect; and each genus comprehends its several species or sorts; (species also in the singular;) and thus we might proceed downwards till we reached individuals. With respect to the name man, it is to be observed that, in its most general sense, it includes both male and female; and therefore the pronoun he, in its general sense, also includes the meaning of she.

As to mode—in common speech if we had occasion to refer to all that it includes, we should probably say, the attributes and properties of things. When the notion is less comprehensive, a variety

of expressions are in use; of which the following examples may serve as some guide to the learner:

The essential and accidental properties of things, ought to be distinguished.

It is not sufficient to consider a thing in itself: we should also consider its several relations to other things.

Good and bad qualities are to be found in all persons, and in all things.

The qualifications (or the requisites) for happiness in this life, are also those for happiness in the next.

The sight of verdure, the sound of a harp, the taste of honey, the smell of a rose, and the feel of velvet, are agreeable sensations.

To see, to hear, to taste, to smell, to feel, are all expressed by one general word, to perceive.

To conceive, to reflect upon, to judge, to know, to will, to imagine, and all other operations of the mind, are expressed by one general word, to think.

Such are the hints, (for they pretend to be no other) which are offered to the learner on the subject of general terms. His own observation in reading, and practice in writing, must supply what is deficient in the assistance here afforded.

Before concluding the chapter, it seems necessary to warn the inexperienced reasoner of the confusion which will often arise in his mind from having to do with what are called *moral universalities*. A moral universal is that which is not strictly universal, but is universal according to the custom of things; (for moral, in this application

of the word, agrees with the Latin word, mos, custom, from which it is derived.) Now almost all the general propositions which occur in reasoning on common topics, are of the nature here described: few of them are strictly or completely true *, and yet they may be true to the full extent required by the argument. Thus, for instance, we may safely affirm that Men are what their education makes them; for though we may recollect many men who have been accomplished or ignorant, virtuous or wicked, in spite of a good or a bad education, yet the proposition is nevertheless true to as full an extent, as, in a general argument, can be demanded. Thus, too, we may assert that Diseases arise from intemperance; for though we may know many persons of the most temperate lives who are afflicted with disease, yet the opposite instances, if we knew them to a proportionate extent, would far outbalance the former; nay, the former instances may not even be exceptions to the general proposition, if we look at large to the effects of intemperance, as descending to generations of men, and do not confine our view to individuals. This wide and sweeping manner of considering things, which leaves particular exceptions out of the question, is, for reasons already given, no easy task to

^{*} Physically or metaphysically true, would have been more scientific words in this place, but they are yet to be explained.

young minds: the exceptions have an undue magnitude in their eyes, nor can any thing reduce them to their real proportion, but a longer experience of the instances which go toward forming the general truth. In the mean time, it is hoped that this *hint*, which defines the difficulty, and points out its cause, will not be thrown away.

CHAPTER III.

ARGUMENTS, AND THEIR SEVERAL KINDS, EX-PLAINED.

An argument is a truth real or presumed, which is brought forward to infer that something else is true; as, " Man is a creature endowed with reason and liberty; therefore he is accountable for his actions." A conclusion which is only in the mind of him who forms it, is termed a judgment; when expressed in words it is termed a proposition. Thus, man is accountable for his actions, is a proposition:—it is proposed in order that its truth may be acknowledged by others. But having been a conclusion from something else before it was proposed, it may be necessary to state what led to it, and this, if stated, is the argument.

Here, however, a proper query arises. What is used for an argument is always another proposition; and granting it to be just so far as it infers the conclusion, whence does the proposition which is used for the argument, derive its support? In

most cases, perhaps, it is also, in its turn, a just inference from some other proposition. Still, in tracing it downwards, if its support be not altogether visionary, we must come to something which is true of itself, and not an inference, -something on which all argument ultimately rests. Now this ultimate ground can consist of nothing but particular or individual truths, for which we have the evidence of our senses or of our consciousness,-if not of our own senses or consciousness, at least of theirs whose testimony we believe. When we have arrived at this ground, we can go no further: we must assent, if ourselves witness; we may believe or disbelieve, if others witness; but all argument is at an end. These particular truths are named facts, and when we communicate them in discourse, we are not said to argue, but to narrate or describe.

If there are sentences expressing truths that seem to rest on their own basis, and yet are of a nature different from those that narrate facts, such difference will be found to exist rather in the expression than in reality, or at least the proposition will be found to have arisen from single and individual instances: for example: It is impossible for the same thing to be and not to be. The whole is greater than its part. These propositions teach no more than we learned from the first single instance we met with, and the instance and the proposition may therefore be deemed the

same; or if this explanation will not be admitted, at least must it be said that the instance led to the proposition, not the proposition to the instance; in other words, we knew not the truth till an occasion made it known. Another, and a different kind of example is afforded by the proposition used as an argument above, -Man is a creature endowed with reason and liberty. That this proposition does not narrate a single or particular truth is certain; but yet it derives its evidence from such truths; for, in reality, it does not rest on its own basis antecedent to previous proof, but is known to be true only through experience. Experience has made us know that each man is endowed with reason and liberty, and through this experience alone, that is, through the evidence of single truths, are we compelled to admit the general truth. Had experience been wanting, we could not have been convinced of it, but by being conducted to individual truths and the evidence of facts, and these would have formed the argument for arriving at the general conclusion. method of proof is called Induction; and the reasoner must always employ it to establish a general truth, unless experience has already established it by the same means.—Among propositions that evidently stand on their own basis because they narrate facts, are such obvious instances as these: I am reading. There was once a famous conqueror named Alexander. The first has the

evidence of our own senses and consciousness; the second, the evidence of testimony, and both are manifestly independent of all argument. But propositions like the following also stand on their own basis, and for the same reason: A circle is such a figure, that all lines drawn from a certain point within it to the circumference, are equal to one another. Maliciously killing a man is murder. If, in the first of these propositions, it were intended to be said, that all figures called circles are perfect according to the conditions laid down; or if, in the second, that the word murder is never used but precisely in the sense assigned to it, neither of the propositions would by any means be evident: but if the proposer only refers to the notion of a circle or of murder which he has in his mind, we can have no cause to doubt him, when he says he applies the word to that notion, and to nothing else. In advancing the proposition he merely narrates a fact, the evidence of which is his own consciousness, and we receive it on his testimony.

Such, then, is the evidence of propositions that have not arisen from antecedent truths, but rest on their own basis. We now come to a second query. Granting what has been shewn, that nature places many truths at once before us, and leaves others to be formed in the mind at will, how do these become the means of inferring other truths? or, whence does a proposition derive its power of inferring another proposition? An in-

ference cannot be the original and necessary appendage of a proposition; for then they would always have been apprehended together, and would, from the beginning, have been one truth, not two. It is through the light which different known truths throw on each other, that they become the means of inferring new truths. A fact by itself can infer nothing, but two facts may throw a light on each other, and a conclusion ensue. Suppose we wish to prove that a person lived in London, it would be no argument to say he lived with his father, unless it were previously known that his father lived in London, and then it would be an undeniable argument. An argument, then, derives its power from something previously known:-this is sometimes called, and perhaps may always conveniently be called, the datum, in the plural number, data, that is the thing or things given, or acknowledged, granted, conceded; and it may be some single fact, as the last example, or some essential or immutable law of nature which we cannot escape knowing as soon as we know our own existence, or some general truth the result of an induction of particulars obtained from experience, or some truth laid down by the reasoner at will as the condition of his argument, or some conclusion out of preceding trains of reasoning, or some hypothesis (i. e. supposition) laid down merely for the sake of raising an argument upon it. In some of these cases, it

may be proper to state the datum previously to using the argument, but in general this is a needless formality, because the argument itself, the moment it is used, necessarily presumes the datum. Example: John was in London yesterday at midday; therefore he was not at York at that time. The datum is as follows: John could not be in London and York at the same time: which is a truth so obvious, that to state it in words seems mere triffing. It is to be observed that the degree of certainty with which any argument infers its conclusion, is always in exact proportion to the degree of certainty in the datum. In the last example, the datum was a truth belonging to an immutable law of nature; hence the inference arising from the argument built upon it, is physically certain, which means, certain from the constitution of nature itself, physical being derived from the Greek word physis, nature. If a datum be some law to which perhaps nothing in nature completely conforms, but which, as it can be imagined to be perfectly complied with, the reasoner himself lays down as the condition of his argument, then the inference arising from the argument built upon it, is true even beyond nature, or it is meta-physically true: (meta, we are to observe, is a Greek preposition signifying beyond:) Example: These lines are radii of the same circle; therefore they are equal to one another. For the reasoner had laid down this datum in the form of

a definition, that a circle is such a figure that all lines (called radii, the plural of radius,) drawn from a point within it to the circumference, are equal to one another; so that having shown the lines in the argument to be radii of the same circle, the conclusion irresistibly follows; and as the perfect circle which exists in his definition, cannot, perhaps, be found in nature, the conclusion is said to be metaphysically true, or, from the science in which this kind of reasoning chiefly prevails, mathematically true. If a datum be some customary, and not an immutable law of nature, then the inference arising from the argument built upon it, is only morally certain, which means certain as far as custom or experience can establish it, moral being derived from the Latin word mos, custom. Example: He combats with six men: therefore he will be overcome. The datum is this: One man must be overcome by six. We can have no cause to doubt this truth; yet, as customary laws may give way in particular instances, neither the datum nor the inference is physically, and still less, metaphysically certain. Physical and metaphysical certainty are often called, by a general name, demonstrative certainty; but moral certainty is nothing more than the very highest degree of probability; and it is so dependent on experience, that an inference which is morally certain to one, may be doubtful to another, till he attains the knowledge on which the argument is grounded. Let it

be supposed, for instance, that a person has died soon after drinking of a certain juice:-he who knows that drinking the juice has been uniformly followed by the same event, will argue and conclude with moral certainty-This person drank of the juice; therefore it was the cause of his death; but one whose experience or knowledge has not put him in possession of any sufficient data, cannot use the argument, nor acknowledge it to be an argument when he hears it used. It may be further remarked, that to demonstrate a truth with physical or metaphysical certainty, we must argue from causes which we know at once to be essential, and thus be able to infer an effect from what is prior to it, (à priori, as it is said,) independently of experience; for in tracing a cause from what is posterior (à posteriori, as it is said,) there is always a possibility that what we think to be the cause, is not so. It is physically possible that an event may happen fifty times after another by chance; nor, however great our moral certainty of the contrary, can we disprove the possibility. Therefore though with regard to the existence of a cause wherever there is an effect, nothing can be more certain, yet in trying to find the cause from the effect, we must be satisfied with moral, and not look for demonstrative certainty.

And now, after the preceding account of what constitutes an argument, if the learner is desirous of knowing what is a syllogism, about which so much is said in theoretical Logic, he has only to write down the datum, the argument, and the inference of each of the preceding examples, and he will have, in each instance, a syllogism, consisting of the premises, namely, the major and minor propositions, followed by the conclusion.

His father lived in London. But he lived with his father. Therefore he lived in London.

John could not be in London and York at the same time.

But John was in London yesterday at mid-day. Therefore he was not in York at that time.

The radii of the same circle are equal to one another. But these lines are radii of the same circle.

Therefore they are equal to one another.

If one man combats with six, he will be overcome. But this man combats with six.

Therefore he will be overcome.

This juice has been the cause of death to all who have drunk of it.

But this man drank of it.

Therefore it was the cause of his death.

To these examples, the following may be added, the datum or major, being, in each, somewhat different:

Every creature endowed with reason and liberty is accountable for his actions.

But man is a creature endowed with reason and liberty.

Therefore he is accountable for his actions.

The universe is a work of chance.

But it (the universe) displays infinite wisdom of contrivance.

Therefore a work of chance displays infinite wisdom of contrivance.

In the former of these two syllogisms, the datum or major proposition might be proved by argument, and is therefore to be esteemed the result of it; in the last example, the datum is an hypothesis, and the conclusion resulting from the argument built upon it, is an absurdity; and thus, by what is called reductio ad absurdum, the assumed proposition is proved to be false.

These specimens are given that the learner may not be ignorant of what is meant by a syllogism. However, it is plain that in forming a syllogism, many superfluous words are used. A proposition put forward as an argument implies its datum; for in presuming it to be an argument, we presume the datum which makes it so, and therefore the latter needs not a separate proposition. A syllogism thus stripped of one of its premises, is called an *enthymeme*. But in common, practical reasoning, even the enthymeme seldom appears in its formal shape, that is, with the argument first, and then the conclusion introduced by the conjunction therefore, as the reader has seen in all

the examples of this chapter. The forms of sentences are infinite; and the reasoner is to choose that form which he imagines best calculated to put other minds in the posture of thought which he is conscious to be the posture of his own; and though the enthymeme, in its regular shape, perhaps best represents the process of thinking by which the reasoner arrived at the conclusion he seeks to establish, yet it may not so well represent the state of his mind when the conclusion is formed, nor be best calculated to convey the truth, as he apprehends it, to others: he may find it most convenient to state the conclusion first, and give the arguments afterwards, or he may choose to comprehend the argument and the conclusion in the same sentence; and, if his purpose requires, he may give a figurative turn to the sentence, by making it an exclamation or interrogation, instead of a plain affirmative. In short, whatever form of expression will give a quick and forcible apprehension of the truth, will be a proper way of conveying it. Thus, for example, the truths so laboriously made out in the foregoing syllogisms, may be shortly conveyed in some such forms as the following:

He lived in London; for his father, with whom he dwelt, lived there.

John was not in York yesterday at mid-day: he was seen at that very time in London.

These lines are equal to one another, because they are radii of the same circle.

How improbable that, in combating with six men, he should not be overcome!

He died through drinking of a juice which never fails to cause death.

Man being a creature endowed with reason and liberty, is accountable for his actions.

Can the universe, which displays such infinite wisdom of contrivance, be the work of chance?

When syllogism and enthymeme are thus reduced into sentences of common form and occurrence, the business of arguing may not seem so much of a mystery as to have needed the explanation which has been given in this chapter; for nothing seems easier than to accompany what we believe and utter as true, with considerations that make it appear so, after the manner of these examples. But it is the apparent facility of arguing, that makes so many people bold in attempting it, who really understand nothing of the business:they mistake assertion for argument, and positiveness for proof: their discourse is a string of arbitrary assumptions; and their evidence nothing but a repetition of the same things, disguised, perhaps, by a different mode of expression, or calculated to impose on the mind by being enveloped in learned phraseology. Thus the village schoolmaster:

In arguing, too, the parson owned his skill, For e'en though vanquished, he could argue still; While words of learned length, and thundering sound, Amazed the gazing rustics ranged around.

GOLDSMITH.

It is hoped that, after the explanation which has been given, the learner will know the nature of an argument too well, to attempt to argue before he is provided with the proper materials. He will know that a real argument, however mixed up in the same sentence with the proposition it is intended to prove or render probable, is always capable of being exhibited as a distinct proposition, -distinct not in words only, but distinct in matter; since a proposition that is not already evident, cannot be made so by being merely repeated in sense, however different the words may be; unless indeed it was not understood as expressed at first, and that the second mode of expression, by making the meaning clear, shows it to be an evident truth:-but this is not using an argument;-it is only explaining one sentence by another. The learner will also know, that no argument can exist, unless there is some ground for it, so plain as of necessity to be admitted; or so laid down as to be deemed given; or so well secured by previous argument as to be longer questionable. It would, for example, be of no use to say that two lines are equal to one another, because they are radii of the same circle, unless it were previously admitted or laid down, that the radii of a circle are equal.

But in this place, the learner will naturally inquire, where he is to find the materials, that is, the arguments, for the proof of propositions. answer it may be said, that when a reasoning person makes up his mind that something is true or probable, it is never without sufficient evidence; and therefore when he undertakes to state to others that it is true or probable, he should be prepared to bring forward the evidence to convince them, by which his own mind is convinced. Perhaps he cannot do this effectually, solely from want of skill in language and method: if so, he has only to practise composition till he acquires skill. But the case, it must be confessed, is something different, when a proposition or theme is given as an exercise; for it is possible the subject may never have been considered by the writer before, and then he has to find the arguments proper to support it. To fit the learner for this exigency, the ancient rhetoricians were accustomed, in treating of Invention, (a word which is derived from the Latin verb invenio, I find,) to lay down a number of general heads which they named Common Places among which the inexperienced orator was to look for the kind of arguments that suited his purpose. But all such helps are vain to a learner who will not think for himself; and

indeed the only benefit likely to arise from them, is a clearer insight into the process of argumentation. For the sake, therefore, of acquainting the learner with the names and application of the principal kinds of argument, the following account, taken partly from the common places, and partly from other sources, is added.

DEFINITION. ETYMOLOGY.

When our arguments to prove the truth of a proposition, are drawn from the nature of the thing itself, we are said to reason from the Definition. Suppose the proposition to be, Pride raises hatred:—here, for our argument, we may define the nature of Pride, as being a high opinion of one's-self, and an undervaluing of others; we may assert that, to remind others of an inferiority wounds their self-love;—that none can brook the tone, the look, or the gesture, which throws them at a distance;—and thus we may go on exhibiting our subject in every point of view, calculated to make the proposition it is joined with, more manifest and convincing than it appeared while it stood alone.

But the learner will observe, that no argument can arise from this or any other head, unless we are warranted in presuming a ground for the argument to rest on. In the foregoing example, the ground is, that he who shows a high opinion of himself—who undervalues others;—who reminds

them of their inferiority,—who wounds their selflove, - &c. raises their hatred. All this, though not expressed to be granted, (datum,) is understood to be so; but unless it were of a more manifest nature than the proposition, Pride raises hatred, it would be absurd to take it for granted, when, by using an argument, it appears that we did not take the proposition for granted. could not say (unless there had been some previous reasoning) Pride leads to misery, because it is a high opinion of one's-self, an undervaluing of others &c.; for the ground on which the argument is to rest, namely that showing a high opinion of one's-self leads to misery, is by no means of a more manifest nature than the proposition, Pride leads to misery, and therefore we must not presume it to be given, unless by some previous argument we had established it.

The argument from Etymology or Derivation, takes place when we show the origin of any of the words we use, in order to prove our proposition. Suppose it to be, The idle who have no work can have no play: here we may begin by an argument from the definition of play, in which we state that play means the same as relaxation, amusement, recreation:—we then bring forward our argument from Etymology, in which we show that relaxation comes from a Latin verb that signifies to loosen what is tight or bent; amusement from words implying a leaving of the muses, that is, our studies;

and recreation from a word signifying to make fresh or to refresh:—and lastly, by arguing from the nature or definition of idleness, we show that neither of these words, according to such derivative meaning, can be applied to the idle; for, say we, how can he relax, whose mind is never bent? how can he leave the muses, who is never with them? how can he refresh from labour, who never encounters it *?

This example, beside its principal object, may serve to show how several arguments are used in subservience to each other, in order to form what, in a more comprehensive sense, is termed THE ARGUMENT; that is the connected series of proofs by which a proposition is established.

ENUMERATION. SPECIES.

We reason from Enumeration whenever we seek to prove a general proposition, by detailing more particularly the truths of which it consists. This kind of argument has already been alluded to under the name *Induction*. Suppose the pro-

^{*} A word agreeing in derivation with another is called its conjugate, as justly is a conjugate of just; and an argument is sometimes said to be taken from a conjugate thus: Prop. He is just: Argument: for he acts justly. But the argument does not hold unless it can be shown that he always acts justly, which would amount to a definition of being just. It does not appear, therefore, that any valid argument, distinct from definition or ctymology, can arise from a conjugate.

position to be, Industry is the source of all the blessings of life: any more particular account of the blessings of life, and of the manner in which they spring from industry, would be an argument under this head *. And that an argument of this kind is a valid argument, the principles which have been unfolded sufficiently explain; for, at all times, in proportion as we descend from general to particular, we draw near to that which is the ultimate ground of all argument, namely the evidence of our senses or of our consciousness.

The argument from *Species* takes place when, instead of proving a general proposition by an enumeration of particulars, we merely give one of those particulars as an instance †. An example was afforded in the corrected sentence at page 24.

^{*} When the proposition to be proved does not pretend to be a physical or metaphysical universal, it is seldom of consequence to the argument that the enumeration is not complete. The argument is good as far as it goes, and even further, if our hearers will carry it further in their own minds. But on scientific subjects, chemistry for instance, when a general principle is to be established, it is of consequence that none of the particulars of the induction which is used to prove it, should be omitted; one left out, may, when discovered, overturn the principle altogether. Hence the many complete changes of doctrine that have taken place in that science within a few years.

[†] It is true, as they say in theoretical logic, that universals are not contained in particulars, and therefore cannot be inferred from them; nor, in reasoning under this head, is it affirmed that the particular contains the universal, but that

GENUS.

In reasoning from this head, we pursue a contrary course from that which is pursued in reasoning from Induction; for instead of arriving at a general truth through a number of particular truths, we infer, from a general truth, any particular truth that comes under it; a mode of reasoning extremely common in theoretical logic; as, in order to show that man is mortal, we go to the genus of which man is the species, and give as our argument that man is an animal: or, to arrange the whole in due form, Every animal is mortal; but man is an animal; therefore man is mortal. There seems at first but little use in this kind of argument, since it does not lead beyond what is already admitted; for suppose a person already knows all that is included in the major proposition or datum, (and unless he knows it, he is not competent to receive the second as a categorical argument *,) then he already knows the conclusion without the formality of the argument, inasmuch as the conclusion is contained in the datum. It is however very useful in order to remind a person,

the particular is an *instance* of what is contained in the universal, from whence, with common candour, the rest of what is contained, may be allowed.

^{*} We may admit an argument hypothetically, i. e. on supposition, without having any ground to admit it categorically, i. e. absolutely.

during the course of arguing, of what he must admit;—it is also useful as the plan of a series of arguments, when one or both of the first two propositions not being evident, are taken as the points to be proved in order to infer the last;—and it is likewise used when, in treating on a particular subject, we employ arguments that belong not to that subject only, but to all of the same kind. Thus in a theme on Music, the reasoner might use arguments that apply to all the fine arts, in order that a conclusion (though it might not be formally stated) should be drawn for Music in particular: as,

It is futile to inquire what gave occasion to the origin of Music. The seeds of the fine arts are sown by nature in the heart of man, and nothing is at any time wanting to bring them forth, but the summer of peace and leisure. Speaking as we speak of an instrument not hitherto in use, or a substance not hitherto compounded, it cannot be said that any of them were invented: no; the fine arts grew up and flourished spontaneously, it being as natural for man to become a poet, a painter, a sculptor, or a musician, as to become a warrior or a statesman. (All that is here said of the fine arts in general, is intended for Music in particular.)

ADJUNCTS. ANTECEDENTS. CONSEQUENTS. CAUSE. EFFECT.

We reason from one or other of these heads, whenever we bring forward any of the things that have, or that we affirm to have, a real connexion with our subject, in order, from the nature of such connexion, to make the truth of our proposition more evident or probable.

Thus if we wished to prove that Living in town is occasionally to be preferred to living in the country; we might show that in town we may find various society collected from all parts, by mixing with which, we are able to get a knowledge of the world; that here the best instructors are also to be met with in all the branches of science; and that here are likewise collected the best specimens of all that is excellent in art. On the other hand, if we wished to prove the superiority of a country life, we might show that it is more healthy, more peaceable, and less exposed to the dangers of temptation. These, with other Adjuncts belonging to the respective subjects, might be the arguments.

Again, if we wished to prove the proposition, God reserves a complete distribution of rewards and punishments for the next world, we might show it to be a consequent of these Antecedents, that He is just, but that in this world He often permits the wicked to triumph, and the virtuous to suffer. And if we wished to prove the proposition Pride leads to misery, we might show it to be true by these Consequents—universal hatred—frequent mortifications—the absence of all sympathy when in distress; and so forth.

Also, if our proposition were, Man is account-

able for his actions, we might shew it to be true (a priori as it is said) by stating the Cause of his being accountable, namely the possession of reason and liberty. And if we had to show that Living always in a crowded city is not wholesome; we might prove it (a posteriori as it is said) by the Effect, namely a weakly frame of body.

We sometimes argue from the Efficient, and sometimes from the Final cause. Suppose our proposition, Worldly pleasures give less and less delight the more they are pursued;—the efficient Cause is the nature of man, or the nature of those pleasures: (it may be stated either way:) the final Cause, or the end which this constitution of things has in view, is, that man may be weaned from worldly pleasures, and cease to set his heart on the delights of this transitory scene, when he ought to be preparing for those of eternity.

SIMILITUDE. COMPARISON. CONTRARIES.

We reason from one or other of these heads, whenever we bring forward things that have no real connexion with our subject, but which make our proposition more evident, striking, or probable, by being exhibited to the mind at the same time with it.

Thus the proposition, A good example is of most use when put forth by people of superior rank,becomes more evident when we bring forward the Similitude—in the same manner as a light shines furthest when placed on high. This is sometimes called, reasoning from Analogy.

And it may be observed in this place, that figurative language, though generally considered to be used for the sake of ornament, is employed quite as much for the sake of argument. Thus when we say, Novels in general only serve to poison the mind, we include an argument in the proposition; for the whole expressed at full would be thus: Novels in general are very injurious to the mind; for they work the same kind of effect upon it, that poisons work upon the body.

Arguing from Similitude and from Comparison, is usually understood to mean the same; but we are more properly said to reason from Comparison, when we bring an admitted proposition of the same kind as that which we seek to enforce, and place it by its side, in order that the latter may receive greater credence. If the adduced proposition exceeds in force the one we intend to prove, we are said to reason A FORTIORI, i. e. from the stronger proposition; if the adduced proposition agrees in force, we are said to reason from a PARALLEL truth or from Analogy, or to conclude from the PARITY of the case; and if the proportion it bears to the other is variable in different particular instances, we may affirm a general proportionate inference.

Thus, in order to enforce the truth, that a man ought to be forgiving towards his friends, we may

adduce the stronger proposition that he ought to forgive even his enemies, and from this stronger proposition (a fortiori) we shall conclude with so much the more force concerning the weaker *.— If we wish to shew that the indolent cannot obtain the favour of Heaven, we may adduce the parallel or analogous proposition, the idle servant cannot be the favourite of his master. And if we wish to prove that they who give way to wickedness are unhappy, we may state our argument and conclusion thus: As a mind full of vice is a mind full of misery, so all are unhappy in proportion as they give way to wickedness.

We reason from Contraries in this manner; Suppose we wish to place in a stronger light the truths, that vice is the source of disquiet, that it leads to infamy here, and punishment hereafter, we may take the contrary truths and say, As virtue promotes peace of mind, so vice is the parent of disquiet; as virtue attracts honour and reputation, so vice brings infamy and reproach; as virtue paves a road to bliss hereafter, so vice leads to eternal punishment.

^{*} This argument is often expressed merely by an emphasis. Thus, if the following sentence is pronounced without any particular emphasis, it merely narrates a fact: I cannot treat a dog ill. But if we pronounce it with the stronger of the two emphatic inflexions on the last word but one, it is an argument a fortiori, intended to prove the implied weaker proposition, I cannot treat my fellow-creatures ill. See the Author's Theory of Elocution, page 103.

Such are the internal topics or sources whence arguments are taken for the proof of propositions. They are called *internal*, because they arise at once from a consideration of the subject, and are invented or found by the writer or orator within limits to which all who consider the subject, have access in common. But there are external topics of no small importance for the proof of propositions, and these are,

TESTIMONIES. SINGULAR EXAMPLES.

They are said to be borrowed from without, for they are such as the writer or orator chances to have met with, and not such as he finds upon the common ground appertaining to his subject. A testimony is the deposition of others, according with our own, and the testimonies usually employed in Themes, are Proverbs, Sayings of eminent men, and Quotations from authors of reputation. A singular example is some fact that had witnesses to it, and not one which the writer imagines as one of a species. All historical facts are of this nature, and all that ourselves witness, or our co-temporaries: these, as it has been shewn, are ultimate arguments, below which it is impossible to descend.

The learner is now acquainted with the distinction of arguments arising from the different places whence they are taken. But there is another cause of distinction among them, namely the different ground or data on which they rest. When an argument has for its ground or datum any truth being part of the knowledge or experience of mankind at large, it is called Argumentum ad judicium, i. e. an argument [addressed] to [all men's] judgment. There are few arguments on common subjects that do not come under this designation, and almost all that have been exemplified in this chapter belong to it.

An argument grounded on knowledge that does not belong to mankind at large, but only to some who have been made acquainted with it, or forewarned that such are the conditions of the reasoning, may be called an argument to the learned, or the initiated: as, This inclining column does not fall, because the line of direction is within the base. These lines are equal to one another, because they are radii of the same circle.

Where an argument takes for its ground the peculiar principles which a man professes, it is called argumentum ad hominem, i. e. an argument to the [peculiar] man. If, for example, we wished to recommend a virtuous life to one who would listen to no argument from duty, but professed himself actuated only by a love of pleasure, we might rest our arguments on his own ground, and by them prove, that a virtuous life is a life of more real pleasure than any other.

When we rest our argument on an acknow-ledgment of the authenticity, and on a consequent reverence, of the source whence it is derived, it is termed argumentum ad verecundiam, i. e. an argument [addressed] to [men's] reverence or respect. This is the presumed ground of testimonies, and of singular examples. And when in reasoning with Christians, we rest it on some fact of Scripture, it is called argumentum ad fidem.

To the names of argument here explained, are sometimes added argumentum ad ignorantiam, an argument to [our hearers'] ignorance; and argumentum ad passiones, an argument to the passions. The former of these means nothing more than a proposition, or a series of propositions, which we require our hearers to admit, not because we can prove them, but because they have not the skill or knowledge to disprove them; and the second means a proposition, or a series of propositions, not calculated to convince thinking minds, but to awaken the passions of the multitude. Neither of these can indeed be called an argument, in the strict sense in which the word has been used in most parts of this chapter.

There is likewise a distinction of arguments arising from the several forms in which they are

expressed. It is, however, only to some of these forms that peculiar names are applied. We have seen that when the datum, the argument, (properly so called,) and the conclusion, are formally arranged, the three propositions taken together, are called a Syllogism*. We have also seen, that when the datum is omitted, the argument with its conclusion form what is called an Enthymeme. Under the topic Genus, an allusion was likewise made to the form of argument called Epichirema, which consists of a series of arguments having a

^{*} And a Syllogism is simple or complex, the former, according to its numerous varieties, distinguished by the appalling names-Barbara, Celarent, &c .- Cesare, Camestres, &c.-Darepti, Felapton, &c.-determined by the figure of the Syllogism, and its quantity and quality;—the figure depending on the manner of comparing the ideas, (as logicians explain the matter,) and the quantity and quality being the universal or particular, the affirmative or negative meaning, of the premises and conclusion. There was a time when skill in Logic was supposed to consist in being able to ring the changes with these modes and figures of Syllogisms. Watts ventured to speak of them somewhat slightingly in his Logic, though he would not altogether omit them, lest his book should be thought imperfect. Duncan entirely neglects them; and Mr. Dugald Stewart affirms, that the logical doctrine about the comparison of ideas, bears, a closer analogy to the task of a schoolboy in parsing his lesson, than to any analysis of a higher kind. See Philosophical Essays, Essay V. Chap. 1. Authority, however, goes a great way, and many of the learned are unwilling to think cheaply of an invention that sprung from Aristotle,

syllogism for its outline, and proving the two premises in order to infer the conclusion*. To the mention of these is to be added the Dilemma, which is a form of reasoning that reduces the thing to be proved to an alternative, and shows it to be true either way. Suppose our proposition to be—We cannot be free from pain or sorrow in this life:—Reasoning upon the datum that in this life we all have wicked inclinations, we propose our alternative, that either we must obey our vicious inclinations, or resist them: then comes the argument, to obey them will bring sin and sorrow; to resist them is laborious or painful; and thus, in one way or the other, the proposition is proved to be true.

A Sorites (So-ri-tes) is a series of arguments so expressed, that we seem to ascend, as from step by step, to the conclusion. Suppose our proposition to be—All men of revenge are extreme fools:
—we argue thus: All men of revenge have their souls often uneasy; uneasy souls are a plague to

^{*} This is the plan of argument in Cicero's famous Oration in defence of Milo, who had killed Clodius. The three propositions which form the plan are these: It is lawful for one man to kill another who lies in wait for him. But Clodius lay in wait for Milo. Therefore it was lawful for Milo to kill Clodius. The first proposition the Orator proves from natural equity, from the custom of nations, from examples, &c.—the second he proves by the arms, guards, &c. which Clodius had provided. And these two being proved, the conclusion is irresistible.

themselves; now, to be one's own plague is folly in the extreme; therefore, all men of revenge are extreme fools.—This indeed is the principle of all extensive argument, only it is not expressed with such formality.

It is to be observed, lastly, that arguments are Categorical or Hypothetical. A categorical argument is one whose ground is of necessity given, -A hypothetical argument is one whose ground is given only for the sake of seeing to what consequences it leads. An example of the latter may be found at page 47. A direct argument (using argument in its extensive sense) is one that at once infers the very proposition which was to be proved; an indirect argument proves it by proving or refuting some other proposition: -direct arguments have been abundantly exemplified: -One kind of indirect argument is where we show the absurd consequences of admitting the proposition contrary to that we design to prove. This is called Reductio ad absurdum, i. e. reducing [the contrary] to an absurdity. An example has just been referred to, and a more extensive one may be found in Young's Night Thoughts, Night IX. commencing,

" What am I, and from whence?" &c.

where the Being of a God is demonstrated by arguments of this kind.

There are some other ways of indirect argument:—one consists in proving a proposition to be true which is less probable than the one we design to establish, and then arguing, a fortiori, that the latter must be true. But a more particular account of these indirect ways of arguing appears unnecessary.

CHAPTER IV.

ON THE METHOD OF WRITING THEMES, WITH EX-AMPLES; AND PLANS FOR SEVERAL THEMES.

In treating of Method in reasoning, it is common to divide it into two kinds, Analysis and Synthesis. All however that seems necessary to be said in this treatise concerning these distinctions, is, that in the mode of reasoning called Synthesis*, the proposition is the conclusion sought; but in the reasoning called Analysis†, the conclusion cannot be previously proposed; for till the arguments on which it depends are unfolded, it is presumed to be unknown. In reasoning synthetically, the arguer knows beforehand what is to be established; and he may, at his option, propose it first, and add his arguments afterwards, or he may neglect to state the intended proposition, till he has brought forward what he has to advance in support of it.

^{*} A Greek word:—the meaning is, a putting [of arguments] together.

⁺ An unfolding or disentangling [of arguments.]

In reasoning analytically, the arguer lays down nothing to be proved, nor has he any foreknown conclusion in view, but he goes on, unfolding one argument after another, till he reaches a conclusion. Analysis, therefore, is the way by which we attain truth; Synthesis, that by which we communicate it. We pursue the method of Analysis, when, not having formed our judgment on a subject, we think to ourselves in order to form one:—we pursue the method of Synthesis when our judgment is formed, and we undertake to convince others. It is scarcely necessary to add that in writing themes, the principle on which we proceed is Synthesis*.

Before any thing more particular is advanced on the method of writing themes, it must be mentioned, that the manner in which a theme is given out, determines what latitude is allowed to the writer in treating it. When a theme is given out thus — On Education — On a Knowledge of the World—the theme may be called unlimited; for the writer is left to lay down any propositions to be proved which he may think fit, provided they bear a due relation to the subject. But a particular proposition being laid down to be proved, necessarily limits the theme; as for instance when

^{*} The analytic method is often adopted for the sake of variety, and of seeming to be guided by, rather than to guide, the current of thought; but the principle, in reality, is always Synthetic.

a theme is given out thus-Man is the Creature of education. A proper knowledge of the World is favourable to virtue. This kind of theme is called a Thesis;—a Greek word signifying position or proposition;—in the plural, Theses. An unlimited theme generally contains many theses; for whenever the writer goes into a new branch of his subject, he must lay down, or have in view, some new proposition, that is a new thesis. In a limited theme, there is but one main proposition, to which every other ought to be subservient. This main proposition is called, by distinction, the thesis, and the theme which is written in support of it, takes the same name *. Premising thus much, we may now proceed to the purposed business of this chapter.

We have seen that when a proposition and its argument are to be exhibited in connexion, their arrangement and manner of expression are by no

^{*} In Walker's very useful book, The Teacher's Assistant in English Composition, what is here called a Thesis, is called, peculiarly, a Theme; and what are here called unlimited Themes, come under the denomination of Regular Subjects, if cast into a particular shape which that Author conceives to be proper for beginners, and Essays, if treated more freely. But the Author of the present manual, believes he is better warranted in using Theme as a general name for all exercises in composition, and Thesis for that peculiar kind of theme whose subject is a proposition.—It should be observed that theme and thesis are words of the same derivation.

means determinate, but that they may be varied in a great number of ways: for instance:

Man is a creature endowed with reason and liberty; therefore he is accountable for his actions.

Man is accountable for his actions; for he is endowed with reason and liberty.

Surely a being must be accountable for his actions, to whom his Creator has given reason and liberty.

How plain does it appear, that a creature endowed as man is with reason and liberty, must be accountable for his actions!

Can we believe that man, endowed as he is with reason and liberty, shall not be accountable for his actions?

Remember, O man, that thy Creator, by endowing thee with reason and liberty, has made thee accountable for thy actions.

From this example it appears, that a proposition and argument, of however little extent, are susceptible of a great variety of arrangement and expression, and hence it will be understood that the different ways in which the arguments of a theme may be stated and disposed, are almost endless. An experienced writer has only to consider his subject and form his conclusions, in order to determine in what manner he shall bring forward his propositions and arguments; but a learner will scarcely be able even to set about con-

sidering what he has to say, till some plan of treatment is laid down. Hence it has been common with those who teach young persons Composition, to give them one general form as a pattern, and to require that they should adhere to it in every exercise. But besides that this formality does not agree with the practice of good writers, it is very difficult to be always pursued; since it requires some ingenuity, even in an experienced writer, to mould all subjects into one shape. It will be much better, therefore, that the teacher should frequently vary the plan he lays down for the pupil to follow, and this he will easily do, by always talking over the subject with him, before he sends him to write it out as a theme. For the conversation can scarcely fail to suggest some peculiar method of treatment, and though it may not be the best that could be planned, it will answer the purpose of an exercise much better than constantly writing upon one model, since, by frequently changing his method, the pupil will most readily attain that variety and ease, which are among the main essentials of elegant composition. However, that nothing may be omitted which has been deemed serviceable, those forms for writing themes which are usually prescribed to young persons, shall be pointed out and exemplified, before any of a different kind are suggested.

Suppose the theme given out to be Friendship:
—teachers recommend the pupil to consider it

under the following heads; the Definition; the Cause; the state in Ancient, and in Modern times; the Advantages; the Disadvantages. Proper answers to the following questions will form such a theme as is here required:

- 1. What is Friendship?
- 2. What is the cause of Friendship?
- 3. What was anciently thought of Friendship, and what examples are on record?
 - 4. What is Friendship often found to be in these days?
 - 5. What are the benefits of true Friendship?
 - 6. What are the evils of false Friendship?

If these questions were fully discussed and answered, it is plain there would be as many themes as there are questions; but learners are not required to consider their subjects so much at large, and the following specimen would perhaps be accepted as including as much as is necessary to be said.

ON FRIENDSHIP.

- 1. Friendship is an attachment arising from congeniality of disposition, habits, and pursuits, strengthened by mutual good offices, and confirmed by time and tried fidelity.
- 2. Man, individually, is a feeble creature, and a sense of this weakness renders Friendship indispensable to him. In difficulty and distress, he looks around for advice, assistance, and consolation; and even when fortune is propitious, and he has all other enjoyments within his reach, he still finds his happiness incomplete, unless

participated by one whom he considers his friend. 3. No wonder, therefore, that a sentiment of such importance to man, should have been so often and so largely considered. We cannot open any of the volumes of antiquity, sacred or profane, without being reminded how excellent a thing is Friendship. The attachment of David and Jonathan, as recorded in Scripture; of Achilles and Patroclus, celebrated by Homer; and of Nisus and Euryalus, depicted by Virgil, are trite examples; but they show the enthusiasm of ancient Friendship, and make us desirous of finding, in modern times, examples equally splendid. 4. Alas! the sentiment is, in these days, much more frequently nominal than real; though it would no doubt be possible to produce, from every rank of society, specimens of generous and disinterested Friendship, creditable to human nature, and the age in which we live.

5. After these remarks, to enlarge on the benefits of possessing a real friend, appears unnecessary. What would be more intolerable, than the consciousness that, in all the wide world, not one heart beat in unison with our own, or cared for our welfare? And if the idea of being unbefriended would make us miserable, the certainty of possessing a real friend, must surely be an indescribable happiness,—a friend whom we know will counsel, instruct, assist, will bear a willing part in our calamity, and cordially rejoice when the hour of happiness returns. 6. Let us remember, however, that all who assume the name of friend, are not entitled to our confidence. False friends are but too common, whose motives are entirely selfish; who are happy to find a

heart they can pervert, a head they can mislead, if thus their unworthy ends can more surely be attained.

In this example, (and the same must happen in other examples,) it will be remarked that the arguments belonging to one point, are not always quite distinct from those of another:—in the definition are some considerations that belong to the cause, and in exploring the cause, the mention of some of the benefits is anticipated.

When, instead of an unlimited title, a thesis is given out to be proved, teachers recommend the following heads as helps to find the arguments: the Proposition; the Reason; the Confirma-TION; the SIMILE; the TESTIMONY; the EXAM-PLE: the Conclusion. Under the first head, the writer re-states his thesis in such a shape, that the arguments he designs to use will easily connect with it. Under the second, he brings forth the strongest, direct, internal argument he can find in proof of it,—that is, from the nature of the thing, from enumeration, from the cause, the effect, the adjuncts, the antecedents, or the consequents. Under the third, he tries to strengthen his proof by showing the absurdity of the contrary proposition, or by advancing some fresh argument of whatever kind, that is not taken from the same source as the preceding, and does not anticipate those that are to follow. Under the fourth, he

uses an argument from Similitude. These are

internal arguments. Under the next two heads, he brings forward testimonies or authorities from authors of repute, and singular examples from history; and lastly, he forms his conclusion not merely in the words of the proposition with which he set out (though in strictness the conclusion would be nothing more) but with some practical inference or inferences appended to it. The following is an example of a Thesis upon this plan.

THESIS. Trust not appearances.

- Proposition. 2. Reason. 3. Confirmation.
 Simile. 5. Quotation. 6. Example. 7.
 Conclusion.
- 1. It is highly imprudent to be guided in our opinions and conduct by first appearances. 2. For the worst of persons and of things wear at times the most engaging aspect: the wily thief approaches in the garb of scrupulous honesty; the corrupter of hearts carries on his brow nothing but benevolence and candour: vices of every kind assume the guise of virtues; and pleasures that end in misery promise, at first, nothing but delight. In things of less importance, deception and fraud are equally common. The unjust trader gives a false appearance to his wares; and mere empirics in art or science, make larger promises than they who are really skilful.
- 3. Is this description of what we meet with in the world exaggerated or false? If the arts of deception are of rare occurrence, why are parents so careful to

impress on their inexperienced children the necessity of caution?—why do we consider the heedless, the giddy, the easily confiding, to be always in danger?—why dowe alter our judgments of things as we grow in years; and why do we often become more suspicious, when, from having acquired greater experience in the ways of the world, we must be less exposed to have our minds deceived? 4. The truth is, we are surrounded with specious appearances, nor is it till after a time that we discover our liability to deception, and that what we take for substantial good may probably be nothing but glittering tinsel. 5. "The world," says Shakspeare, "is still deceived with ornament: it is

To a most dangerous sea, the beauteous scarf Veiling an Indian beauty; in a word,
The seeming truth which cunning times put on
To entrap the wisest."

6. When the Greeks, after a ten years' siege, found themselves unable to take Troy by force, they feigned an abandonment, and left behind them a large wooden horse filled with armed men. This being dragged into the city by the credulous Trojans, the men left their concealment in the night, opened the gates, and gave admission to the besiegers. Thus fell Troy; and thus are all persons liable to be lured to their destruction, who will not mistrust appearances when there is danger of being deceived. (7.) Therefore, let us not be too secure or confiding,—but when new doctrines are offered to our notice; or new inventions that throw the old into the shade; or new acquaintances whose man-

ners are more engaging than tried friends,—let us suspend our judgment, and not be carried away by first impressions: let us wait till time and experience furnish some sure grounds for the opinion we are inclined to form, and the conduct we are disposed to pursue.

In reviewing this example, it will appear that the several parts of the theme are not completely distinct from each other, nor indeed, without the greatest stiffness and formality can they ever be so. The argument from similitude is not peculiar to the portion of the theme assigned to it, but occurs wherever a figurative expression is used. The conclusion is implied in all the arguments that are used to enforce it, and might be omitted without any prejudice to the reasoning, the proposition being in fact the conclusion sought to be established. Neither is it by any means necessary that all the parts of the theme should occur in the order here laid down, but the proposition, the reason, the confirmation, the simile, the quotation, the example, supposing them all to occur, may come in whatever place the current of the writer's thoughts happens to bring them. Instead of dividing a theme into the parts here exhibited, some teachers divide it into three -1. Definition: 2. Arguments: 3. Judgment or Conclusion. Certain it is, that a writer ought to understand the nature of the subject concerning which the proposition is made, before he attempts the other parts of his theme; he ought to have framed the

proposition clearly in his mind; and he should be able to support it by suitable proofs. But though these are indispensable pre-requisites toward writing a theme, it does not follow that distinct and separate parts corresponding with them must be found in every well-written essay. Who, for instance, having a moral essay to write on Industry or on Time, would go out of his way to frame what is not at all wanted, -a logical or philosophical definition of Industry or of Time, or furnish any explanation of the thing in the nature of such a definition? Accordingly it will be found, that what those teachers call a definition in such cases, is nothing but an oratorical definition, which is so far from being distinct from the part of the theme called the Argument, that it is, in fact, the principal argument employed. With all submission, therefore, to his predecessors, the author of this manual cannot help thinking, that the parts into which they divide a theme, are very frequently distinctions without a difference." When a truth is proved by argument, he believes that the truth or proposition, and the argument are the only things essentially different. As to an explanatory definition, it may or may not be necessary, in order to make known the meaning of a word which is to be used in the proposition; but, every such definition becomes a part of the proposition; for it is stated in order to be included in it. Even the distinction between the proposi-

tion and the arguments holds good only while the proposition is in the course of proof; for if it is established in order to be made use of toward inferring some further truth, it is then, -considered in this relation,-likewise an argument, and the truth inferred from it, is the proposition or conclusion sought, and thus on till the writer attains the final conclusion he intends to establish. Yet even this final conclusion is, possibly, never stated formally, but is merely inferred without being expressed. So much for the distinctions laid down by teachers of Composition, which we shall often attempt to discover in vain in the best essays of our best writers. Are we then to prescribe no method to the young theme-writer, but leave him to set down his thoughts on every subject at random? Nothing can be further from the author's meaning: there must be method in every theme, or it does not deserve to be called one; but it should be a method that grows out of the writer's view of the subject, not founded on distinctions which may be merely nominal, and give the stiffness of a division without its uses. If a peculiar method for each theme proposed, should be too much to require of the pupil at first, it must be for the teacher to suggest whatever plan may occur to him as not unsuitable, after a conversation upon the subject. By way of specimen, it shall be the business of the remainder of this chapter to lay down plans for several

themes, being such as have occurred to the author in giving out the respective subjects to his pupils. They do not, by any means, pretend to exclusive propriety, but are left to be followed if none other occur more agreeable to the teacher or the learner's views.

On Composition. As this word is variously applied, you must begin by a definition:—1. State the general meaning of the word, its application to particular arts, and the art to which you limit the meaning. 2. Show the necessity of studying the art, by proving that knowledge is of little use, without skill to communicate it: 3. that no one is skilful in the art, but through observation and practice. (The figures refer to the divisions or paragraphs which are to appear in the theme.)

To exemplify the use which is to be made of these hints, this first theme shall be subjoined as a pupil might write it at full.

ON COMPOSITION.

Composition, as a general term, signifies arrangement. Hence we hear of Composition in music, in painting, in printing, and in other arts. I use it at present to signify the art of arranging our thoughts, and expressing them in a connected manner.

All who are destined to receive a liberal education, should deem this art of essential importance. Their other accomplishments will avail little, if they want ability in this. It is by their discourse that the world

will judge of their acquirements; and will certainly not give them much credit for what they know, if their manner of thinking appear immethodical, and their language confused and inelegant. On the other hand, when a person exhibits his thoughts, in writing or conversation, with clearness and grace, the world is apt to give him more credit for his knowledge than perhaps he can justly claim.

To acquire this important art, we must employ the means by which all arts are learned,—observation and practice. Let us not imagine it was ever obtained on other terms. The readiest in the art were at some pains to gain their skill, and the dullest, if they can recollect a time when they thought and spoke with less method and precision, may improve still further, if they will give up their minds to the necessary study and exercise.

On Conversation. 1. Begin by remarking, that the ability to hold converse with each other is little appreciated, because in so familiar use, that its value escapes notice. Go on to state that it will therefore be interesting and useful to consider the *Improvement* and the *Pleasure* we derive from it. 2. Explain the *Improvement* we ought to derive from it. 3. Show that we are indebted to it for the chief *Pleasures* of Life.

ON READING. 1. Explain in what way Reading may be deemed a kind of conversation. 2. Show that, in general, it is of a higher character than ordinary conversation, because the persons with whom we choose so to hold converse, will be those who have been most eminent for their

knowledge, and the language employed is more exact and polished. 3. It seldom has the same lively effect on the mind, because the tones of the voice are wanting, and because we cannot interrupt the discourse by pertinent queries. 4. Show that, by being properly conducted, under the direction, and with the assistance, of an intelligent friend or teacher, it becomes much more effective than without such aid.

On Writing. 1. Trace the probable progress of the art, from pictures to artificial symbols of things, from these to marks standing for whole words, and lastly to marks standing for the elementary sounds out of which words are framed. Show the advantages of this last mode. 2. Relate, if you can, some story, to prove how a man entirely ignorant of the art, must be surprised at its effects. 3. State the reasons which should make us highly prize it.

On Printing. 1. State how long this invention has been in existence among Europeans. 2. What was the condition of the mass of mankind previously to its invention. 3. What have been its effects.

ON HISTORY. 1. Define history, and show at the same time what is meant by biography. 2. Propose to enumerate the chief inducements or recommendations to the study of history, comprehending biography in your notion of it. 3. First, we must study history, in order not to be ignorant

of things, which all well educated people know.

4. Secondly, we should study history for the sake of the better knowledge it gives us of our species, and the characters of men. 5. Thirdly, because it is a system of practical morality, teaching us, by example, what to avoid, and what to follow. 6. Lastly, because it is calculated to interest the mind and improve the heart.

ON STUDY. 1. We cannot become wiser or better informed than others, but by the earnest application of the mind. Go on to illustrate this truth by comparison—we must dig deep—science lies not on the surface ready to be picked up. It cannot be transmitted—compare it in this respect to wealth, rank, &c. 2. Study is the exercise of the mind, as labour is of the body. Pursue the analogy, and show the effects to be similar in the two cases. 3. Books do not furnish the only means of study.

On Happiness. 1. It is the great object of all our actions. Men pursue it in different ways according to their different characters—illustrate this truth. 2. Show that happiness does not depend on things external, provided we have all that our bodily wants require, but on the temper of the mind—that wealth and power are not necessarily favourable to the state of mind in which happiness consists; that guilt is altogether destructive of it. 3. As a conclusion, show in what condition and under what circumstances, we are likeliest to en-

joy as much happiness as human beings are capable of.

ON PIETY. 1. It is the source of virtue, and of all happiness. First, it is the source of virtue. A man may do good actions from other motives,—from fear, from ostentation, from habit, from the absence of evil opportunities: show that these motives will not always operate the same effect, but that a man, while influenced by piety, must be virtuous. 2. Secondly, it is the source of happiness; for happiness depends on the temper of the mind, and whatever may be a man's outward circumstances, no one can deprive him of that peace which is the result, &c.

On Hope. 1. It is the most benignant of the passions; the charm of our existence; the star that guides the traveller as he journeys on a rugged way, &c. 2. On the other hand it must be confessed that hope is often delusive. Every day adds to our disappointments. In youth, we see nothing but joys in the path before us; but, &c. 3. It is not difficult to conceive why we are doomed to these disappointments. We are destined for another world, and must be taught to carry our hopes beyond this transitory scene.

On Memory. 1. It is the storehouse of the mind, designed to preserve all that time and observation acquaint us with. The judgment and understanding get stronger as we grow older, but memory is generally in full perfection when we

are young. Show the final cause or purpose of this. 2. It should be cultivated in connexion with the understanding, otherwise we learn like parrots. State the consequences of such a mode of study. 3. Enumerate some of the pleasures of memory.

ON GOOD TEMPER. 1. It is one of the greatest blessings we can enjoy;—a talisman which makes every thing agreeable;—a shield that preserves its possessor from the attacks, &c.; or it is like the rays of the sun in spring, which give, even to the most gloomy objects, &c.; while a bad temper, on the other hand, is like, &c. 2. Show how far it depends upon ourselves to correct a bad temper, or preserve a good one.

ON CURIOSITY. 1. It is highly useful and praiseworthy when well directed: it is very pernicious when directed amiss. 2. State the effects of well-directed curiosity; 3. of ill-directed curiosity.

On Envy and Emulation. 1. The root of these passions is the same, namely, a desire of superiority, but the soil in which it grows is different. If the desire of excellence springs up in a mind endowed, &c.; but if, on the contrary, it takes possession of, &c. 2. State the symptoms by which a person may know whether he is actuated by envy or by emulation in his conduct towards a competitor.

On Patriotism. 1. It is a sentiment incul-

cated by nature. We love our kindred with the strongest affection; next in degree those with whom we are intimate; next, &c. 2. As nature has an end in all her gifts, inquire into the benefits of patriotism.

ON LIBERTY. 1. A subject calculated to awaken emotions of admiration in favour of those who have struggled for it. We think of the heroes of Greece, and Rome, of Switzerland, and of Britain, and pronounce with reverence the names of, &c. 2. Our admiration and love of liberty are justified by the evils which attend a state of slavery. 3. But liberty must not be confounded with licentiousness. In the freest states, there always is, and always must be, a due subordination of ranks.

ON FILIAL DUTY. 1. The earliest virtue we can practise; the earnest of future excellence:—the child who is dutiful to his parents, gives the best pledge that in after life, &c. 2. It is the sign of a good understanding as well as of a good heart. 3. It is esteemed an indispensable virtue in all pagan nations, and the religion of our own country makes it a command of God.

On Self-knowledge. 1. No kind of knowledge is less cultivated, yet none so important. Prove that it is little cultivated, by describing how readily people of different characters exclaim against the vices in others which are conspicuous in themselves. 2. Argue its importance by show-

ing the amendment of character and conduct which would be the result of even a moderate advance in it.

On Obedience. 1. Our progress in virtue, in knowledge, and in happiness, depends upon obedience. First, our progress in virtue depends upon it, from the nature of virtue which consists, &c. 2. Secondly, our progress in knowledge depends upon it, because we learn from the instruction of others; whose guidance, if we are not ready to follow, &c. 3. Thirdly, our progress in happiness depends upon it, because, by it, we shall be preserved from those ills which are the fruits of disobedience, namely, from, &c.

ON ENTHUSIASM. 1. Ardour of mind engendered by something that affects the imagination. It is a fault when it arises from spiritual pride, and leads a person, in religious affairs, to extravagant notions of divine interference. 2. But when joined with judgment and modesty, it is an admirable quality, and leads to the noblest results—in the active virtues, in the pursuit of science, in the cultivation of the fine arts.

On Adversity. 1. No one desires adversity; yet to creatures whose present existence is destined for a state of trial, it is often a real good. First, it softens the heart, and makes it sensible of the woes of others. He who never felt pain, cannot sympathize with those who feel it: it is the same with regard to all afflictions of whatever kind. 2. Se-

condly, it purifies as well as softens the heart. Prosperity makes us forgetful of ourselves and our duties. Our appetites and passions grow clamorous through indulgence. The best and wisest men have been tempted by prosperity—David—Solomon. 3. Thirdly, it makes us capable of enjoying good fortune. He who has felt the misery of cold, hunger, damp, and weariness, knows the value of a good fire, &c. So it is with all change of fortune after we have been in affliction.

On Habit. 1. It is a principle of so much power, as to be called, with justice, a second nature. Show its power by remarking the amazing facility we acquire in the practice of various arts, compared with our first attempts. 2. There is every reason to suppose that our minds are as liable to the control of habit, as our bodies. 3. Draw suitable inferences for the regulation of our moral conduct.

ON ORDER. 1. It is of the utmost importance in all the concerns of life. The Creator who made Order to spring out of Chaos, ordained it to be absolutely necessary to the well-being, and the right conduct of man. The blessings of good government are the blessings of Order. The same principle operating on a smaller scale, is the source of comfort and happiness in every household. 2. Order necessary in our studies;—the consequences of want of method in the pursuit of knowledge, and of loose, desultory reading. 3. A love of order

almost the same with a love of virtue; for while we love order, we cannot love what is intemperate or unrestrained in mind, manners, passion, or conduct.

ON THE REGULATION OF THE THOUGHTS. 1. If we wish to be wise, if we wish to be good, if we wish to be happy, we must regulate our thoughts. First, if we wish to be wise:—for the powers of the mind act as we suffer them to act. If we allow them to dwell on trifles, we shall miss the solid treasures of the understanding, and remain without improvement. 2. Secondly, if we wish to be good:-for evil thoughts always precede evil actions. To repress the former is therefore a sure way to prevent the latter. 3. Thirdly, if we wish to be happy:—for what prevents any one from being happy whose bodily wants are supplied, but the uneasiness of his own thoughts? Describe different characters who suffer their thoughts to destroy their peace—the over-careful person, the envious person, the covetous person, &c.

The author hopes that these outlines for treating the several subjects, will be sufficient to introduce the young learner to the business of themewriting. He will now give a few more titles, without suggesting any plan of treatment.

On Taste. On Fashion. On Poetry. On Music. On Painting. On Sculpture. On Architecture. On the Drama. On Astronomy. On Geography.

On Agriculture. On Food, Shelter, and Clothing. On Industry. On Time. On Health. On Sleep. On Procrastination. On Amusements. On Solitude. On the Golden Mean. On Egotism. On Affectation. On Vanity. On Vulgarity. On Advice. On Justice. On Prudence. On Temperance. On Fortitude. On Anger. On Pride. On Charity. On Flattery. On Friendship. On Prejudice. On Ambition. On Courage. On Spring. On Summer. On Autumn. On Winter. On Wealth. On Poverty. On Peace. On War. On Morals. On Manners. On Religion. On Superstition. On Death.

In all these, the theme or subject proposed is unlimited, and the writer is left to lay down whatever particular propositions or theses he may choose, provided they have a due relation to the general subject. Instead of an unlimited theme, the teacher will sometimes give out a thesis: examples will scarcely be necessary, because in the plans already suggested, each division of the theme, is intended to be an illustration of some particular thesis. However, for the further guidance of the learner, the following examples are added.

'TIS EDUCATION FORMS THE COMMON MIND.

1. Begin by explaining the thesis in your own words. Admit that instances may be found of persons whose life and conduct do not seem to agree with the education they received. Point

out that these exceptions are not sufficient in number to invalidate the general rule. Argue that, according to a comprehensive view of education, they may not even be exceptions; and then define education to include much more than the instruction of professional teachers; shew that whatever circumstances give a bias to the mind during youth, may properly be reckoned to take a share in forming the person's education. 2. As an additional argument, show that education is appointed by Providence as the means of correcting whatever is naturally bad in the human mind; and it cannot be supposed that the means are not, at all times, adequate to the end, if employed to their full extent, and adapted completely to the particular case.

VIRTUE IS ITS OWN REWARD.

Remark that human understanding must always be unable to trace the ways of Providence in his dispensations to men; but of this we may be sure, that he cannot be unjust, though, in the folly of our hearts, we may sometimes be tempted to question the equity of his appointments in the portion of good and ill dealt out to the virtuous and the vicious in this life. Go on to show, by various examples, in what manner the latter often seem to have the advantage of the former in a worldly point of view. 2. Show that things are to be estimated according to the happiness which they

really confer; and prove that the vicious cannot find happiness in the things which they have coveted. 3. Describe the qualities of mind and heart which constitute virtue, and which must always accompany it while virtue lasts, and prove that these are more than sufficient to weigh against all other advantages; and therefore if all other advantages are wanting, (which however is seldom the case,) that virtue nevertheless has an abundant recompense.

KNOWLEDGE IS POWER.

1. Remark that this is a celebrated maxim of the great Lord Bacon. Prove it to be true by the dominion which man has acquired over the several parts of nature. He is inferior in bodily strength and natural cunning, to many of the inferior animals. Exemplify this truth, and show how, by his knowledge, he nevertheless makes all animals subservient to his designs. 2. Show that even the most boisterous and unruly of the elements, the vast ocean, is, in a great measure, subdued to his purposes. He has learned to find his way across its trackless expanse, and to waft. through its means, the wealth of distant lands from shore to shore. 3. Exhibit instances in illustration of the same truth from other departments of nature; show that the daily discoveries which are making in the sciences continually add to our

power; and bring forward, in particular, the invention of the steam engine, and the purposes to which it is applied.

It hardly needs be remarked that there are other forms in which themes may be set to exercise the thinking faculties of young people, beside those that have been exemplified. They may sometimes be required to form an opinion of what they read in history or in poetry, and give the reasons for their opinion. And sometimes it will not be amiss to propose questions in the following shape, leaving to their choice the one or other side of an alternative.

Which, for a permanence, would you prefer,—a town or a country life?

Which is the worse condition—health with precarious subsistence, or abundance with precarious health?

Which is more to be deplored—mental or corporeal blindness?

Who was more deserving the title of Great—Alexander or Alfred?

In treating such questions, the writer should set out by endeavouring to ascertain some general principles as a guide to his subsequent decision. In the first of these, for instance, he should inquire, what are the chief comforts and advantages a reasonable man looks for in life?—in the second, how far that precarious subsistence is an evil, which permits a man to continue in health?—in the third, what is meant by mental blindness?—and in the fourth, what constitutes real greatness of character? These premises determined, the decision will be easy.

The author, before he dismisses these chapters from his pen, thinks it not beside their purpose to remind the young student, that the object of logic, is, not to engender a fondness for disputation, a contradictious spirit, a love of paradox, and a readiness to contend against all settled opinions, but, on the contrary, that real improvement in the art can take place only in a mind imbued with modesty, humility, and candour. It is no proof of improved rational powers when a person is ready to argue at random against the opinions of others, merely for the sake of argument, or is forward to discredit what is held in repute by the good and the wise, because it is not immediately evident to his own understanding. That these remarks may make the deeper impression, the following Thesis is added as a concluding exercise, along with an outline for treating it.

A LITTLE LEARNING IS A DANGEROUS THING; DRINK DEEP, OR TASTE NOT.

1. Begin by explaining what is meant by learning in this thesis: show that it evidently does not mean Reading, Writing, Languages, Arithmetic,

Geometry, and those other things we learn in youth to fit us for the duties of life; for though it is highly desirable to know those things well, yet to know a little is undeniably better than to be wholly ignorant. What the writer must mean, is Speculative learning or Philosophy; the business of which is to call in question whatever is commonly learned on the warrant of custom or authority, in order to establish it, if capable of being so established, on the surer basis of reason. 2. Having thus defined the notion of learning here contemplated, go on to show, that, during the course of such inquiries, our reason is apt to be misled by imperfect views; that instead of being timid and cautious in the conclusions we draw, we are almost irresistibly led to be bold and presuming, because we think we must know better than others who have not ventured, like ourselves, into the fields of inquiry; and hence we not only call in question, but we despise all principles, for which we cannot see any sufficient foundation; forgetting that the cause may be, the yet imperfect state of our knowledge. As we advance, we get wider, views; we see and are forced to acknowledge our early mistakes; our former arrogance teaches us humility; and we examine, with more candour, the doctrines opposed to our own opinions. 3. The foregoing arguments, properly developed, will be sufficient to prove the truth of the thesis. But if the writer possess the requisite information, he

may illustrate the arguments by proofs from history:—he may show what mischiefs have arisen from adopting, for maxims of conduct, the suggestions of an imperfect philosophy, and how unsafe it is, in Religion, in Morals, in Politics, to give a hasty reception to doctrines, which having arisen one day, may possibly be overwhelmed the next.

APPENDIX.

I. QUESTIONS FOR EXAMINING THE PUPIL, ADAPTED TO THE FOREGOING CHAPTERS.

* * The answer is occasionally added to the question, when it cannot be readily collected from the page referred to.

CHAPTER I.

What is the strict meaning of the word Theme? page 1.

What is that frequent meaning of the word, in which

you will have to use it? page 1.

What art is the writing of themes intended to improve? page 1.

What is the first fault to be guarded against in writing themes? page 2.

What is the second fault? page 3.

What is the third? page 8.

What is the fourth? page 12.

What is the fifth? page 13.

What is the sixth? page 14.

What relation do the fourth, fifth, and sixth faults bear to the first?

Answer. They are particular instances of the first fault.

What is the seventh fault? page 15.

What is the eighth fault? page 16.

Of what general fault are the seventh and eighth to be reckoned as particular instances? page 15.

What is the ninth fault? page 19.

What is the tenth? page 20.

What is the eleventh? page 21.

What is the twelfth? page 24.

What is the thirteenth? page 26.

What is the fourteenth? page 28.

Why are these faults, namely, the ninth, tenth, eleventh, twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth, considered to be particular instances of the third general fault?

Answer. Because they all consist in some disagreement, or want of just connexion, among thoughts which are intended to explain, enforce, or illustrate each other.

CHAPTER II.

What chief thing is it that renders the writing of themes difficult to young persons? page 29.

When is it they may be deemed fit to enter on exercises of this kind? page 29.

In what manner do young persons make use of general terms in their early converse? pages 29 and 30.

What two things are necessary toward the art of generalizing? pages 30, 31.

How will the first of these two requisites be obtained? page 31.

How will the second requisite, namely a skilful use

of language in expressing general notions and conclusions, be obtained? page 31.

Give some examples of the difficulty which may be felt in expressing a general proposition? pages 32, 33.

How may the learner's improvement be forwarded in the apt and ready application of general terms? page 33.

What does the term being comprehend, in philosophical language? page 33.

In common language, how do we speak of substances? pages 33, 34.

How are material beings classed? page 34.

What is the plural of genus? page 34.

What is the plural of species? page 34.

What are the genera of animals? page 34.

What does each genus comprehend? page 34.

What have you to remark concerning the general sense of the appellation Man? page 34.

How, in common language, do we speak of what is philosophically called *mode?* page 34.

Give some instances of expressions which are used in speaking of modes. page 35.

What is meant by a moral universal? pages 35, 36.

Are the general propositions which chiefly occur in reasoning, meant to be affirmed as strictly or completely true? page 36.

Give some examples of general propositions, and explain the amount of their meaning. page 36.

What is it which frequently and necessarily obstructs the ready admission of general truths into the mind of a young person? pages 36, 37.

CHAPTER III.

What is an argument? page 38.

What do you call any conclusion which you form in your mind, before you express it in words? page 38.

What do you call it when expressed in words? page 38.

What is the ultimate ground of all argument? page 39.

When we communicate facts, are we said to argue? page 39.

Of what description is the following, and other propositions of the same kind: "It is impossible for the same thing to be and not to be?"

Answer. It is a truth which we know on the first occasion for knowing it, which, in this instance, is as soon as we know our own existence. But the expression of this truth in general terms, is a contrivance of learning, and is familiar only to those who have been taught*.

Of what description is the following, and every proposition of the same kind: "Man is a creature endowed with reason and liberty?"

Answer. It is a general truth comprehending a number of particular truths, and resting on the evidence they furnish.

Give obvious instances of propositions that rest on their own basis, because they narrate facts. page 40.

Explain why the following propositions may also be

* Nothing is taught beyond the words: the truth itself cannot be made clearer than it always was; and the unlearned are apt to think the proposition idle.

said to rest on their own basis: "A circle is such a figure, that all lines drawn from a certain point within it to the circumference, are equal to one another." "Maliciously killing a man is murder." page 41.

How do known truths become the means of inferring new or unknown truths? pages 41, 42.

What is a truth called, when, by its assistance, some proposition is an argument for inferring a new or unknown truth? page 42.

What is the plural of datum? page 42.

Enumerate such truths as generally form the data on which arguments are raised. page 42.

Why are the data of arguments more frequently understood than expressed? page 43.

What is the meaning of physically true? page 43.

What is the meaning of metaphysically true? page 43.

What is the meaning of mathematically true? page 44.

What is the meaning of morally true? page 44.

To what kind of certainty does the term demonstrative apply? page 44.

What is meant by arguing à priori? page 45. See also page 59.

What is meant by arguing à posteriori? page 45. See also page 59.

Why can there be no demonstrative certainty in arguing à posteriori? page 45.

How may any of the examples you have had occasion to use, be exhibited in the form of a syllogism? pages 45, 46, 47.

In theoretical logic, what are the three parts of a syllogism called? page 46.

When speaking of the first two propositions, what do you call them? page 46.

What is a syllogism called, when stripped of one of its premises? page 47.

State such considerations and such examples, as may prove that the enthymeme needs not be, and is not, always expressed in its regular form. pages 47, 48.

Whence is it that people are bold in attempting to argue, who really know nothing of the business of arguing? page 49.

In what respects ought you, who, in the foregoing considerations, have studied the nature of an argument, to be better informed? page 50.

What is the origin of the word invention? page 51.

When are we said to reason from the definition of the thing? page 52.

When does the argument from Etymology take place? page 53.

What do you mean by *argument* in a more comprehensive sense than you generally employ it in these explanations? page 54.

When do we reason from Enumeration? page 54.

What does Induction signify? page 54. See also page 40.

When does the argument from Species take place? page 55.

How do we proceed in reasoning from the Genus? page 56.

Why does there seem, at first, but little use in this kind of argument? page 56.

What are some of its uses? pages 56, 57.

When do we reason from the Adjuncts, Antecedents, Consequents, Cause, or Effect? pages, 57, 58.

Exemplify each of these. pages 58, 59.

Explain what is meant by the efficient, and what by the final Cause. page 59.

When do we reason from Similitude, Comparison, or Contraries? page 59.

Exemplify the first of these. pages 59, 60.

Is figurative language employed in speech solely for the sake of ornament? page 60.

When are we properly said to reason from Comparison? page 60.

In reasoning from Comparison, when are we said to argue à fortiori? pages 60, 61.

In reasoning from Comparison, when are we said to argue from a parallel truth, the parity of the case, or Analogy? pages 60, 61.

When may we draw a general proportionate inference in reasoning from Comparison? pages 60, 61.

How do we reason from Contraries? page 61.

Why are the topics of argument which you have thus far described, called internal? page 62.

What are external topics? page 62.

Why are these said to be borrowed from without? page 62.

Thus far, you have distinguished arguments by different names according to the different topics or places whence they are taken. What is the next cause of distinction among them? pages 62, 63.

What is meant by argumentum ad judicium? page 63. Explain the nature of argument to the learned or initiated? page 63.

What is meant by argumentum ad hominem? page 63. What is meant by argumentum ad verecundiam? page 64.

What is meant by argumentum ad ignorantiam? page 64.

What is meant by argumentum ad passiones? page 64.

What is the next cause you have to mention for distinguishing arguments by different names? pages 64, 65.

What is a syllogism? page 65. See also pages 46, 47.

What is an Enthymeme? page 65. See also page 47. What is an Epichirema? pages 65, 66.

What is a Dilemma? page 66.

What is a Sorites? pages 66, 67.

What is a categorical argument? page 67.

What is a hypothetical argument? page 67.

What is meant by direct argument? page 67.

What is meant by indirect argument? page 67.

What is meant by reductio ad absurdum? page 67.

CHAPTER IV.

What is the derivative meaning of the words, Analysis and Synthesis? page 69, and note.

In what chief respects do these two principles differ? page 69, 70.

When may a theme be called unlimited? page 70.

What is a thesis? page 71.

Give me an example to prove the variety of forms in which a proposition and its argument may be expressed. pages 71, 72.

Can you state certain heads, beginning with the Definition, the Cause, &c., under which some teachers recommend pupils to consider unlimited subjects? pages 73, 74.

Can you state the heads under which they recommend a thesis to be considered, beginning with the Proposition, the Reason, &c.? pages 76, 77.

Describe what is to be done under each of these, pages 76, 77.

What objection may be made to these plans?

Answer. That the heads so distinguished are very often "distinctions without a difference."

Can any plan be substituted in place of these?

Answer. No one single plan. Every theme ought, however, to have a plan, which should arise out of a careful meditation on the subject, assisted, if possible, by some converse upon it with a friend or the teacher.

II. A FEW GENERAL RULES FOR PUNCTUATION.

THE marks used in writing—some, to render clear the grammatical construction, some, the general intent, of sentences—are the full stop, (.) the colon, (:) the semicolon, (;) the comma, (,) the dash, (—) the interrogation point, (?) the exclamation point, (!) the marks of parenthesis, () and the marks of quotation, "".

The following are the general rules for using these several marks.

RULE 1. The full stop is to be used when the words preceding form complete grammatical construction, and do not depend, for any qualification of their sense, on what is to follow *; as, "He who lifts himself up to the observation and notice of the world, is, of all men, the least likely to avoid censure. For he draws upon himself a thousand eyes, that will narrowly inspect him in every part." To this rule, let it be remembered, Rule 3 is exceptive.

RULE 2. The colon, semi-colon, and comma, are to be used subordinately to each other in sentences resolvable into large clauses, sub-clauses, and clauses still smaller. Thus, in the following example, a colon is used where the sentence divides into its two principal

^{*} While a nominative expects its verb, a verb its nominative; an adjective its noun, or a noun its adjective; while a verb is to come, which will look back to a preceding clause for its grammatical subject; or a relative pronoun, which will look, in the same manner, for its antecedent; while long clauses of complex sentences are dependent on what is to follow, as is the case in the very sentence now in progress: the construction of the sentence is manifestly incomplete. But the construction should also be deemed incomplete, if the words, though grammatically independent of those that are to follow, do not form the sense preconceived by the writer, except by being taken in connexion with them. Hence the members separated by the perpendicular line in the following sentences, are to be distinguished by a comma, and not by a full stop: "I would not hear his apology, | because I thought him a deceiver." "God made the country, | and man made the town."

parts; a semi-colon, where the former principal part divides into two subordinate parts; and commas, where those subordinate parts are still further divisible: "As we perceive the shadow to have moved along the dial, but did not perceive it moving; and it appears that the grass has grown, though nobody ever saw it grow: so the advances we make in learning, as they consist of such minute steps, are only perceivable by the distance."

Rule 3. But the most common employment of the colon and semi-colon, is to point off those portions of discourse, which, though grammatically independent of what follows, are yet so closely connected in meaning, that the writer is averse to using the full stop, according to Rule 1. Examples: "We cannot penetrate futurity: all is a blank to our view; a dark unknown presents itself." "Modesty is one of the chief ornaments of youth; and it has ever been esteemed a presage of rising merit." This rule leaves much to discretion, but it is as precise a one as can be formed from the actual practice of writers; some of whom point higher than others; that is, some use a full stop where another would use a colon, and a colon where another would use a semi-colon. Consistency of practice must always be mainly regarded.

Rule 4. One principal employment of the comma, is to point off clauses which are too long to stand without any stop. We may, for example, write the following sentence without commas: "A man of generosity will not give pain to a vanquished enemy by insolent

deportment." But the clauses being made longer, will require to be pointed off thus: "A man of generous and heroic feelings, will not give pain to a vanquished enemy, by displaying a haughty and insolent deportment *." This rule, likewise, of necessity leaves much to discretion, and the pupil is warned, as before, to be consistent in his practice.

Rule 5. Another principal employment of the comma, is to point off clauses which intervene or break the connexion between the parts of sentences, or which, in any way, come out of their usual place. We may, for example, write the following sentence without commas: "The tutor lays the foundation of the pupil's honour by instruction." But if the last clause, instead of being in its natural place, comes first in the sentence, or intervenes between any following words, a comma or commas must be used: thus; "By instruction, the tutor lays the foundation of the pupil's honour." "The

^{*} The clauses of a sentence are those portions of it which must be taken together in an enlarged analysis, before we resolve it into single words. In the sentence above, the words which form the subject of the verb are a clause; the verb and its necessary adjuncts are another clause; and the words constituting the object of the preposition by, are a third clause. The second clause is subdivisible at pain, but as there is no smaller stop than a comma, we do best to leave the place without any stop. A relative pronoun sometimes begins, and sometimes does not begin, a new clause: "The gentle mind is like the smooth stream, which reflects every object in its just proportions." "Many of the evils which occasion our complaints of the world, are wholly imaginary."

tutor, by instruction, lays the foundation of the pupil's honour." "The tutor lays, by instruction, the foundation of the pupil's honour *."

Rule 6. Nouns, adjectives, verbs, or adverbs, occurring in single series, are to be separated from each other by commas; as, "Reason, virtue, answer one great aim." "The husband, wife, and children, suffered extremely." "Plain, honest † truth, wants no artificial covering." "David was a brave, wise, and pious † man." "In a letter, we may advise, exhort, comfort, request, and discuss." "Success generally depends on acting prudently, steadily, and vigorously, in what we undertake."

But two nouns, adjectives, verbs, or adverbs, paired by a conjunction copulative or disjunctive, and not being part of a longer series, are to have no comma between them; as, "Virtue and vice form a strong

* Some further examples are here added of the use of the comma in pointing off intervening clauses:

"The path of piety and virtue, pursued with a constant spirit, will assuredly lead to happiness."

"What can be said to alarm those of their danger, who, intoxicated with pride, become giddy and insolent?"

"If, from any internal cause, a man's peace of mind be disturbed, in vain we load him with riches or honours."

"Continue, my dear child, to make virtue thy principal study."

"Hope, the balm of life, soothes us under every misfortune."

† There is no comma after the last adjective, because it immediately joins its noun. But in a series of nouns before a verb, the comma comes after the last noun as well as after the others, because a pause is always admissible between a noun and its verb.

contrast." "We must avoid being negligent or careless." "Study expands and ennobles the mind." "We know not whether they acted well or ill."

Rule 7. The words first, secondly, formerly, lastly, nay, so, hence, again, once more, above all, on the contrary, in the next place, in short, and all other words and phrases of the same kind, must generally be distinguished by commas; as, "Remember thy best and first friend; formerly, the support of thy infancy, and the guide of thy childhood; now, the guardian of thy youth, and the hope of thy coming years." "He feared want; hence, he overvalued riches." "This conduct may heal the difference; nay, it may constantly prevent any in future." "Finally, I shall only repeat what has been often said, If the spring put forth no blossoms, in summer there will be no beauty, and in autumn, no fruit; so, if youth be trifled away without improvement, riper years may be contemptible, and old age, miserable."

Rule 8. The dash is to be used where the sentence breaks off abruptly; where the construction is of an interrupted nature; where some unexpected transition occurs; and where, instead of proceeding at once to complete a sentence, we repeat something already said in the same or different words: the following are examples: "If thou art he—but oh! how fallen! how degraded!" "If acting conformably to the will of our Creator;—if promoting the welfare of mankind around us;—if securing our own happiness;—are objects of the highest moment:—then we are loudly called upon to extend the great interests of religion and virtue."

- "Here lies the great—false marble! where? Nothing but sordid dust lies here."
- "We must not suppose that a just man—he who uniformly acts according to the dictates of his conscience—does not always find, within his own breast, an abundant reward."
- Rule 9. The interrogation point, the exclamation point, the marks of parenthesis, and the marks of quotation, are to be used as indicated by the following examples: "Who adorned the heavens with such exquisite beauty*?" "How many instances have we of chastity and excellence in the fair sex †!"
- "Know then this truth, (enough for man to know ‡,) Virtue alone is happiness below."
- "Shakspeare says of a talkative man, 'He speaks an infinite deal of nothing: —how many such characters we meet with!"
- * A note of interrogation should not be employed in cases where it is only said that a question is asked, and where the words are not used as a question; as, "I asked him why he trembled."
- † It is a vulgar practice to put a note or notes of admiration at the end of a sentence which is not really of an exclamative kind, but which merely narrates something that is thus indicated to be wonderful, lamentable, reprehensible, or dreadful.
- ‡ The learner must distinguish between intervening members that need merely commas, and such clauses or sentences of distinct import, as require the parenthetical marks.

Beside learning to employ the points properly, the young writer must attend to good usage in beginning his words with capital or small letters. In general, he is to begin all words with small letters, except

The first word of his Theme, Exercise, or other Composition:

The first word of any of its divisions:

The first word after every full stop:

The first word after the interrogation or exclamation points, if the members they terminate have as complete a meaning as those which require a full stop:

Proper names of all kinds; as, George, York, the Thames, the Strand:

Adjectives derived from the proper names of places; as Grecian, Roman, English:

Every principal word in the titles of books; as Thomson's Seasons, Rollin's Ancient History:

The appellations of the Deity, and the pronouns that stand for Him:

The pronoun I; the interjection O; and The first word of every line in poetry.

THE END.

LONDON:

PRINTED BY R. GILBERT, ST. JOHN'S SQUARE.

FEB 2-1949











LIBRARY OF CONGRESS